

TOWARDS FREEDOM

Documents
on the Movement
for Independence
in India

1946

Part 1

edited by

Sumit Sarkar

Towards Freedom

ICHR: Towards Freedom

General Editor

Sabyasachi Bhattacharya

Volume Editor

Sumit Sarkar

Towards Freedom

Documents on the Movement for Independence in India
1946

PART 1

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Sabyasachi Bhattacharya

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General Editor's Preface

The agenda of an endeavour such as this series of volumes defines itself in part through editorial practice and in part through attempts towards a statement of the objectives. The historical context in which this project developed initially is generally known. While it will be excessively deterministic to overestimate the influence of that historical conjuncture on the academic inputs which went into the making of the project's agenda, one has to take that into account as one of the formative factors. After the vertiginous years leading to 1947, there came a time when historians turned their attention to those years and archives began to acquire and provide access to the source materials. The last years of 'British India' began to be addressed by professional historians and indeed the theme attracted national attention both in India and in Britain. In June 1967 the British Prime Minister Harold Wilson made an important statement in this regard in the House of Commons: "in view of the great interest now being shown in historical circles in the last days of British rule in India" there would be published "documents from the India Office records on the Transfer of Power and the events leading up to it."¹ The announcement included the assurance that "the editors will be independent historians who will be given unrestrained access to the records, and freedom to select and edit the documents for publication." The outcome of the project thus framed at the highest level in England was the series known as *The Transfer of Power* edited by Nicholas Mansergh, Smuts Professor of the History of the British Commonwealth at Cambridge. In addition to the announcement made in Parliament, Mansergh, as 'the Editor-in-Chief', stated that the "purpose of the series" was "to make available to scholars in convenient printed form the more important British historical records relating to the transfer of power in India".²

Arguably, there is an obvious inadequacy in the notion that all that happened in 1947 was the 'transfer of power'. In Indian perception the attainment of Independence was a significant moment in the history of the struggle against British rule in the subcontinent and the representation of the emergence of independent India and Pakistan as transfer of power, an alteration of constitutional relations, tended towards the occlusion of that history. The focus on the legalistic notion of power transfer and the discourse of modalities of transfer marginalized the more significant part of the historical processes at work. Likewise, the self-imposed limitations of the British documentation enterprise left many issues unaddressed: the project was to select documents from British state papers relating to the constitutional arrangements from the Cripps Mission of 1942 to 15 August 1947. In that discourse in the official archives and the Viceroy's papers the Indian voice was recorded only in so far as a few important spokesmen of political parties were among those present in negotiations with the British Indian government. The Indian institutions, personalities and events were included in the documentation only to the extent the official papers took cognisance of them.

1. *Parliamentary Debates*, 5th Series, House of Commons, vol. 749, 30 June 1967, cols. 147–8.

2. Nicholas Mansergh, ed. *The Transfer of Power*, London, 1976, vol. VI, 'Foreword', p. viii.

That is not to say that the task of documentation in the twelve volumes produced between 1970 and 1983 by the HMSO was not competently handled by Professor Mansergh and his editorial assistants. These volumes were products of the best of British scholarship. But the initial conception of the project was delimited to certain issues and historical sources. I recall that in 1971 when I invited Sir Penderel Moon, a brilliant officer of the Indian Civil Service and later a member of Mansergh's editorial team, to a seminar at St Antony's College, Oxford, a number of us questioned him about this and he pointed out that perhaps we had not paid attention to the subtitle of the Mansergh volumes, 'Constitutional Relations Between Britain and India'. Clearly the agenda for any Indian endeavour towards the documentation of the years leading to independence in 1947 would be different. How it would be different was suggested by Professor Sarvepalli Gopal in General Editor's Preface to the first volume produced under the present project. He said that the projected volumes aimed to "present, within limits set by the sources, documents relating to the activities, attitudes and ideas of the diverse classes and sections of Indian society, all of which contributed to the attainment of Indian independence with partition."¹

It is significant that the title chosen for this series was *Towards Freedom*. While the sub-title emphasizes the focus upon the 'movement for independence', the title evokes discourses in other domains as well—the struggle for social justice, for economic empowerment against exploitation, and for cultural autonomy. These were also prominent discourses within the over-arching framework of the Indian people's struggle for freedom. One is reminded of the words of Mahatma Gandhi in an essay he wrote in the *Harijan* a few days before his death, on 27 January 1948: "the Congress has won political freedom but it has yet to win economic freedom, social and moral freedom."² This awareness of different categories of freedom allows space for a conception of the freedom struggle far wider in amplitude than the textbook approach to the struggle for independence from British rule. It makes a struggle for freedoms of many kinds thinkable. And it broadens the idea of a history of freedom struggle. This is how I understand the choice of the title for this series: *Towards Freedom*.

To sum it up, the present series of volumes focuses upon not just the legal processes of the transfer of power and the overtly political activities which brought that about, but also the struggle for freedoms in different domains—economic, social, and cultural. The agenda of the series, therefore, is open to the entry of themes relating to the struggle of the peasantry, the working classes, and different sections of people as well as to a broad spectrum of political organizations who in their own light worked towards attainment of freedom.

To any one interested in the craft of history a pertinent question will be, how will the documentation reflect this agenda. The selection of appropriate documents is not an easy task. We are here looking at long term historical processes such as the slowly evolving ideas about nationhood or class solidarity, the dynamics of popular participation in political movements, the links being forged between movements of the peasantry and industrial labour and the freedom struggle, the youth and student movements vis-à-vis the political parties, the changing social hierarchy in caste terms in relation to electoral and agitational politics, the gender

3. S. Gopal, "General Editor's Preface", in Partha Sarathi Gupta, ed., *Towards Freedom 1943-44*, Delhi, 1997, p. vii.

4. M.K. Gandhi, 'Congress Position', *Harijan*, 1.2.48, *Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi*, vol. 90, p. 497. Also see 'His Last will and Testament', *Harijan*, 15.2.48 where he spoke of economic, social and moral dimensions of independence, beyond the political independence which had been attained, *ibid*, p. 526. This document was written on 29 January 1948, shortly before Gandhi's death, and it was also referred to in the AICC papers as 'Draft Constitution of the Congress'.

relationships evolving from the traditional patriarchal structure towards developments that had liberating potentials, the anti-feudal and anti-British movement in the princely states, and the interface between all these trends in the ideational and cultural domains. The instantiation of these long term processes through events as reflected in documents is the task. The documents reflect fragments of the events which constitute links in the chain of certain historical processes of long duration.

It was decided years ago at an early stage of this project to distribute the work among editors on a purely chronological basis, that is to say each volume in this series would relate to a particular year assigned to an editor. This opened the project to the possibility that the long term processes would be lost sight of in the depiction of the particularities of the year each editor is taking care of. I incurred unpopularity in the Indian Council of Historical Research (ICHR) when I suggested many years ago that a thematic division of labour between the various editors, rather than a chronological one assigning one year to each, would have been a better organizing principle.⁵ I will not elaborate that point again. Whatever the drawbacks or merits of the chronological frame for assigning editorial responsibility might have been, it has been in operation for twenty years and hopefully it will enable us to complete the task before us. For the volume editors the limitation of chronological framework has been probably an irksome constraint. The editor of this volume for instance points to the continuity of a wave of popular anti-British resistance from the later months of 1945 to February 1946, but he has to limit his narrative to the later phase, the events in the first two months of 1945. On the whole, the volume editors, each a distinguished historian, bore with fortitude the limits set on their temporal range, and they situate the particular historical conjuncture of a given year in the broader perspective of the long term processes as they see them in the Introduction to the volume.

The Editor's Introduction is thus a bridge between the narrative of events and the narrative of the freedom struggle as he or she sees it. The editor's introductory observations also provide a space for the presentation of his or her approach to the themes and issues the volume addresses and the explication of that approach. This includes what the editor of the present volume has called 'alternative voices'. The Introduction by the eminent volume editor Sumit Sarkar specially merits attention since he offers some provocative arguments which might generate interest and discussion. As the General Editor, I shall refrain, for the present, from entering that discussion.

As regards the sources from which the documents are collected for the volumes in this series, Professor Sarvepalli Gopal, in his General Editor's Preface, remarked in 1997: "Although some of the volumes contain documents drawn from regional language sources, a fully comprehensive selection from these sources merit a separate project."⁶ This was an accurate prediction of the future output, the volumes now coming out. In deciding on what non-English and regional language sources will be collected the volume editors have exercised their judgement in deploying the research assistance they were provided. Judging by the two volumes produced till now and the manuscripts now being received from editors and being processed in the editorial office at the ICHR, the editors possibly felt that on most of the themes addressed there exist sufficient source material in the English language and in translation. A more

5. S. Bhattacharya, 'The Empire on Borrowed Time: Towards Freedom 1943-44', *The Book Review*, vol. xxii, Jan.-Feb. 1998, pp. 24-5.

6. S. Gopal, General Editor's Preface, P.S. Gupta, ed., *op. cit.*, p. vii.

systematic search for and selection of non-English sources would have made this collection more complete, but it was evidently not found to be feasible. We are committed to a schedule which requires that half a dozen pending volumes should go to the publishers as early as possible and the aim now is to complete the project undertaken in 1988-89 rather than to expand the scope of the editors' search to new sources.

One more point needs to be made about the sources. E.J. Hobsbawm, in his survey of the 'short twentieth century', points out that Indian independence started off a chain of analogous political decisions aggregating into the decolonization process in Asia, later Africa. World War II was "the last great triumph of the British Raj—and at the same time its last exhausted gasp." Immediately after Indian independence came the turn of British Burma, Sri Lanka (Ceylon), Palestine, and Dutch Indonesia—all in 1948. French Indo-China, present day Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia were to follow. Next decolonization spreads to Africa and globally "the old colonial powers were patently too weak even after a victorious war, to restore their old position."⁷ What do we infer as regards India, what did that mean to India? Probably, as the subjects of the Raj began to sense this debilitation of the imperial powers and the consequent shift in the global power relationships, the perception of the politics of independence struggle changed radically. This was happening globally in old empires, among the people and leaders in the imperial metropolises as well as their colonial peripheries. On the latter process we do have some documentation in the present series, but not much on the shift in the imperial metropolis. This is because *ab initio* the project was meant to be mainly for the collection of sources in India.

The mass and density of archival sources generated by the government in India will be evident to even a layman who glances at the following pages. Unlike similar enterprises in England, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka to collect sources throwing light on the last days of the British Raj, this series includes a great many activities and events which are not overtly political or constitutional. Sumit Sarkar underlines the fact that he has included a good deal on labour and peasant struggles, movements in the Princely State, subordinate caste agitations, etc. and that "this might surprise some" since these "were not quite anti-British in any direct sense". Actually this choice is quite in line with that of the editors in previous volumes on 1938 and 1943-44. Where the editor has been innovative is his decision to exclude documents from the *Transfer of Power* series, *Selected Works of Jawaharlal Nehru* etc. He has mentioned two reasons. First, that these are generally available and space should be made for other things less widely known, and second, that the aim is, as Gopal had written in his Preface in 1997, "to avoid exclusive preoccupation with high politics." It is possible to argue that the dynamics of the independence struggle, including popular movements, were not unconnected with the encounters and negotiations in the domain of high politics. A narrative of 'high politics'—not exclusively high politics—is useful in 1946 in particular. Fortunately, the editor has provided in his Introduction some indication of that story.

A few words on the editorial apparatus in these volumes may be in order. The chapters are thematically organized while the sequence of placement of documents in each chapter is strictly chronological. There are two guides for the reader, first the Calendar of Documents indicating the subject of each document and the source, and second, the Index at the end of the volume. An effort has been made to make the volumes as 'reader-friendly' as possible. In some collections

7. E.J. Hobsbawm, *The Age of Extremes: The Short Twentieth Century, 1914-1991*, London, 1994, p. 219.

8. Ibid., p. 216.

of this nature the editorial practice has been to provide a synoptic account of the contents of each document. This has not been the pattern in this series chiefly because it would increase the size of the volumes. As it is the present volume is very bulky; the second part of it, on Princely India, is also substantial and its publication will follow soon.

Before concluding I would like to put on record my appreciation of Professor Sumit Sarkar's generosity in putting up with annoying delays this project was subjected to on account of political interference to the detriment of academic autonomy. The result of such interference was that, as he points out, the ICHR authorities withdrew his work from the publishers, no successor was appointed after Professor Gopal passed away, and all work on the project was suspended for about five years. I was asked in March 2005 to take up the task initiated by Professor Gopal, my senior colleague at Jawaharlal Nehru University. Upon accepting this position, an honorary one, my first task was to request Professor Sarkar to write the Editor's Introduction and to finalize the Calendar of Documents for publication. He was kind enough to do that by the end of 2005 and early in 2006 I re-negotiated the arrangement with the publishers, the Oxford University Press. The disruption in the production of the volumes in the series was tantamount to political censorship of academic work. It is interesting to note here that the British developed a system which prevented political parties' interference in such matters. The British project for the documentation of the Transfer of Power was processed through a mechanism which ensured inter-party consensus in parliament.⁹ For this purpose a standing inter-party group of Privy Counsellors was appointed and it included a minister of the ruling party and representatives of the Opposition parties, the Conservative and Liberal Parties; thus, once the project was passed by that committee, the task was left to experts duly appointed and no political interference occurred. In the light of what happened in our country on account of governmental changes, one might say that there was much that was commendable in the mechanism that was thus devised in Britain.

It is hoped that the agenda outlined above makes it amply clear what have been and remain the principles of documentation in the *Towards Freedom* series. The editors of the volumes have had the freedom to exercise their choice within certain parameters and they focus upon the themes which emerge from the selected documents. The editor of this volume has expounded his "own views on 1946, its antecedents and aftermath" only in his Introduction. In the main text, the documents, he has tried to "keep this collection distant from any political or historiographical bias" though he is, of course, aware that "no selection can be entirely value free." The volume editor has declared as his principle what most editors have followed in practice. Likewise, another editor stated what most other editors would endorse: this is not "an attempt to provide materials for an 'official' or 'definitive' statement on the history of the freedom movement."¹⁰ I accepted the responsibility of being the General Editor of this series since I believe that although the government of India has funded this enterprise, like many other research projects and institutions in this country, the output of the project is the work of autonomous minds of scholars who are guided by standards of the discipline of historiography. As I have said in the beginning, not only statements of the objectives like the one I have attempted now, but practice has defined principles as well and that is how an academic community works.

* * *

9. *Parliamentary Debates*, 5th series, House of Commons, vol. 733, col. 1706.

10. Basudev Chatterjee, ed. *Towards Freedom 1938*, Delhi, 1999, p. lvii.

In conclusion, I would like to acknowledge my indebtedness to the editorial team. In the latter half of 2005 as I was casting around for colleagues to work with me in the *Towards Freedom* project, I was fortunate to obtain as colleagues Professor Arjun Dev and Dr. Amit Kumar Gupta (who had an important role in an earlier stage of this project); later Rajesh Kumar, Dusi Srinivas, and V.I. Benaseer joined us. Needless to say, the Editorial Committee which met from time to time since the middle of 2005 was of great help: my thanks go to my distinguished fellow-editors in charge of different volumes: Professors Bipan Chandra, Bimal Prasad, K.N. Panikkar, Sumit Sarkar, Arjun Dev, Mushirul Hasan, Basudev Chatterjee, and Dr Sucheta Mahajan. I would also like to thank the Oxford University Press, New Delhi, for their cooperation. Archiving is to historiography what brick-making is to architecture, and therefore our thanks also go to many unnamed archivists.

Finally, I would like to dedicate this volume, the first to be published since the revival of the *Towards Freedom* series in 2005, to the memory of the former General Editor Professor Sarvepalli Gopal.

SABYASACHI BHATTACHARYA
General Editor

Editor's Introduction

The 1946 Volume of the *Towards Freedom* series at last becomes available, after delays and one quite unjustified interruption that has been much commented on in recent years. I see no purpose in going into the details and replay well-known controversies, and so will confine myself to a very brief statement of the essential facts.

I came to be associated with the *Towards Freedom* project in 1989, upon my appointment as Editor of the 1946 volume under the new format then decided by Indian Council of Historical Research (ICHR) at the initiative of the then Chairman, Professor Irfan Habib. Editors were appointed for individual years, who would work on an entirely honorary basis, without going on leave from their regular posts, with provision made only for a one-time remuneration of Rs 25,000 upon publication of respective volumes. I state these details only because of certain unwarranted charges of making money through delays that have been occasionally made about the Editors. It also took quite some time to be able to gather together an effective team of assistants.

The volume was substantially completed in around seven–eight years, not perhaps an inordinate length of time, given the format under which the Editor could only work on it along with carrying on full-time teaching and other responsibilities of his regular job. The first draft of my 'Introduction' was written in 1997. (It appears now in a thoroughly revised form, to bring it more up to date with current ways of thinking about the period). Following the pattern which had been decided upon, and followed regarding other volumes, I handed over the manuscript in 1997, except for my Editor's 'Introduction', to ICHR. Professor S. Gopal, then the General Editor of the entire series, subsequently went through it, ICHR cleared it for publication in accordance with the procedures followed with respect to other volumes, and then despatched it to Oxford University Press (OUP). Printing such bulky volumes was obviously time-consuming, and the publishers took up one volume at a time. But in February 2000 I was informed by OUP that proofs would be sent to me very soon, and a first version of the initial chapter had actually reached me when the entire work was interrupted by the authorities in ICHR, newly-reconstituted by the then government. Remarkably, the only official intimation I have ever received about this decision in the entire period between 2000 and 2004 (when, after the elections that summer, steps began to be taken about resuming the project) was in the form of a letter from OUP, baldly stating that ICHR has halted its publication. No intimation or explanation was ever given to me by any official body throughout these years.

In summer 2005, the reconstituted ICHR communicated to me the resumption of the project. Neither time nor the kind of financial support required for collection and incorporation of such additional material is available now, given the prime necessity for publication as quickly as possible of the remainder of the volumes planned some thirty years back. I had therefore to send the manuscript to the Press without major changes, adding only a new 'Introduction', and an analytical 'List of Contents'.

As I have made clear in the third part of this 'Introduction', I look on this volume as a collection of documents, and not a site for expressing my own views on 1946, its antecedents, and aftermath. The next section will be the only place where I do briefly expound my own views, for the readers have a right to know something about my approach to the events that figure in the volume. No selection can be entirely value-free, though I have done my best to keep this collection distant from any political or historiographical bias.

II

What we now know had happened often appears inevitable in retrospect. Hindsight imposes patterns on the past not always open to all its rich complexities. The sense of openness, the existence, or at least the deeply-felt perception once of alternative possibilities, gets marginalized or forgotten. It is difficult, today, not to think about the year 1946 as leading, more or less inexorably, to the climacteric events of August 1947. Freedom, at once exhilarating and supremely tragic, then came to the subcontinent accompanied by Partition, fratricidal holocaust, and the forced migration of millions. Professional historical analysis and documentation have concentrated upon top-level constitutional negotiations between the British, the Congress, and the Muslim League. A lot has been written about the talks of Indian political leaders with the British Labour Government's Cabinet Mission (March-June 1946), the latter's 16 May Plan for a weak centre and autonomous provinces grouped into three sections, two of them with Muslim majorities, and the formation of the Interim Government under Nehru on 2 September. The many problems that developed over its functioning, given the continued and deepening tensions between the Congress and the Muslim League, proved insuperable and led on to Mountbatten's plan of a surgical division of the subcontinent (June 1947). And the chain of communal riots that accompanied these negotiations and largely determined their outcome, beginning with the great Calcutta killings of August 1946, inevitably loom large in any effort today to think about the significance of the penultimate year of the British Raj.

The ten years or so that have elapsed between the completion of this volume and its publication now have seen one major historiographical development, indicative of a pattern of significant change combined with a certain continuity. The massive communal violence and genocide that began with the Ramjanmabhomi movement and the destruction of the Babri Masjid in 1992, have led to a spate of collection and analysis 'Partition memories', some of them extremely sophisticated and valuable. Oral history of this kind has brought the experiences and sentiments of the people of those times into the foreground of historical interest, ending the earlier preoccupation with high-level negotiations alone. Basically celebratory accounts of August 1947 have given place to agonized effort to piece together tales of everyday suffering of 'ordinary' people on both sides of the border that had then sprung up overnight, and Manto's 'Toba Tek Singh', the mad man who refused to choose between Hindustan and Pakistan and died with his head in one and feet in the other new nation, has come to signify for many a symbol for 15 August 1947 more meaningful, perhaps, than the tricolour flying proudly over the Red Fort. Yet change has been accompanied by a continuity. The focus, naturally enough for the most part, remains on the key political transition to Independence inextricably combined with Partition and communal holocaust, though sought to be looked at now from 'below' rather than the 'top', in terms of popular memories rather than high-level negotiations. The implicit narrative is significantly different in content and mood, but it remains basically as linear as the one that had preceded it.

The documents included in this volume, however, were produced by men and women who could not have known what would happen next year, and reading them now might convey to us a sense of deeply felt and fought for alternatives that soon came to be submerged and largely forgotten. History, no longer read in the light of hindsight alone, might seem less linear, inevitable and 'natural' than often assumed. In particular, they help to highlight the many instances of united popular anti-British actions most notably between November 1945 and February 1946, but continuing to some extent throughout the year. The most remarkable feature of these outbursts was Hindu-Muslim solidarity on the streets of, particularly, Calcutta and Bombay, in utter contrast to what would happen from August 1946 onwards. Students and workers protested and went on strike in Calcutta on 22–23 November 1945 and 11–13 February 1946 against the trial of prisoners of the Indian National Army. The heroic strike of the Royal Indian Navy ratings on 18–23 February was marked by massive solidarity actions in Bombay and elsewhere. The British army could restore order in Bombay city only after killing 228 civilians and injuring 1046.¹ Yet official nationalist hagiography has seldom commemorated the RIN Mutiny—no doubt largely because contemporary Congress leadership attitudes had been lukewarm if not hostile. The volume of historical writings and published documentation about this final round of directly political, anti-British struggle cannot begin to compare with that available, say, about the Cabinet Mission negotiations or the intricacies of the Mountbatten Plan. And even in these days of high prestige of oral histories, there has been little or no effort to mine the memories of participants of these dramatic events—reminiscent, at times, of the *journal* or 'days' of Revolutionary France—even though a diminishing number would still be available.

In his preface to the previous volume of *Towards Freedom* series, Professor Gopal had emphasized that a common aim of these otherwise autonomously structured and edited volumes has been a desire 'to avoid an exclusive preoccupation with high politics.' This is particularly relevant, I think, for 1946. The presence of the *Transfer of Power* series edited by Nicholas Mansergh and Penderel Moon has helped the *Towards Freedom* volumes from 1942 onwards to find more space for material other than the meticulously-presented documentation of high-level politics seen, in the main, through the eyes of the British officials, for which the former series will remain invaluable. In 1946, moreover, high politics became exceptionally concentrated, around the Cabinet Mission talks and their aftermath: and here the already published documentation becomes truly abundant, extending through four volumes of Mansergh, with well over a thousand pages on the Cabinet Mission alone.²

1. With almost incredible foolishness, the British had started the first INA trial by putting together on the dock P.K. Sehgal, Shah Nawaz, and Gurbaksh Singh Dhillon—a Hindu, a Muslim, and a Sikh—and holding it at the Red Fort with its associations of 1857 and Subhas Bose's call of 'Dilli Chalo'. The protests of 11–13 February—Rashid Ali Day—were against the sentence of seven years rigorous imprisonment passed on the Muslim prisoner Abdul Rashid. For accounts of these months, see Sumit Sarkar, *Modern India 1885–1947* (New Delhi, 1983), chapter 8, and the references given there; Sumit Sarkar, 'Popular Movements, National Leadership, and the Coming of Freedom with Partition', in D.N. Panigrahi, ed., *Economy, Society and Politics in Modern India* (Delhi, 1985); and, for an alternative view, Sucheta Mahajan, 'British Policy, and Popular National Upsurge 1945–6', in A.K. Gupta, ed., *Myth and Reality: The Struggle for Freedom in India, 1945–47* (Delhi, 1987). See also two accounts based on first-hand knowledge, *The RIN Strike* (by a group of victimized ratings, New Delhi, 1954, 1981), and Gautam Chattopadhyay, a Calcutta student activist of those years, 'The Almost Revolution', in Barun De, ed., *Essays in Honour of S.C. Sarkar* (New Delhi, 1976).

2. N. Mansergh and P. Moon, ed., *The Transfer of Power 1942–47*, vol. VI, *The Post-War Phase: The Labour Government, 1 August 1945–22 March 1946* (London, 1976); vol. VII, *The Cabinet Mission, 23 March–29 June 1946* (London, 1978); vol. VIII, *The Interim Government, 3 July–1 November 1946* (London, 1979); vol. IX, *The Fixing of a Time-Limit: 4 November 1946–22 March 1947* (London, 1980).

More is involved, however, in the shift in focus recommended by Professor Gopal than the purely additive illumination of levels less studied by historians and largely untouched by the Mansergh documentation. Such a shift might be vital also for explaining more adequately the courses of high politics. In 1946, in particular, the decisions and actions of leaders, British or Indian, cannot really be understood without the counterpoints provided by varied, even contradictory, pressures from below. And here, once again, a questioning of tacit teleological assumptions through a measure of counterfactuality could be helpful. It can be argued that certain possibilities, other than those eventually actualized, remained open till at least the last quarter of 1946.

The British, in the first place, could have managed, for a time, to cling on the power without fundamental concessions across the whole, or at least a part of the subcontinent. Certainly there was no lack of such desires on the part of significant and influential sections, even after the war had ended and Labour had come to power in Britain. One could cite, as stray but not untypical instances, the initial plan for putting on trial no less than 600 of the 20,000 INA prisoners, and dismissing from service another 7000³; the implicit suggestions for a fairly long-term British military and civilian presence in India in the two documents with which the volume begins⁴; and the Breakdown Plan Viceroy Wavell had busied himself with in the early months of 1946. This has sought a middle course between 'repression' and 'scuttle', through which the British would withdraw to the Muslim-majority provinces of the north-west and north-east, thus trying to make of Pakistan an Indian Northern Ireland while leaving the rest of the subcontinent to the Congress.⁵

Arguably, what rendered impossible the chances of such conservative British options was the threat posed by popular militancy, above all in the winter of 1945-6: the months perceptively described by Penderel Moon, editing Wavell's Journal, as 'The Edge of a Volcano'.⁶ The outbursts had been sporadic, but extremely militant⁷, and, above all, united—and, as Wavell confided to the private of his Journal on 30 May 1946, "we must at all costs avoid becoming embroiled with both Hindu and Muslim at once."⁸ The months clearly invoked in British minds fears of another 1942—minus the anti-fascist war situation that had then helped to justify ruthless repression in the eyes of many abroad otherwise sympathetic to Indian aspirations, provided as potential back-up a huge Allied military presence, deprived Indian nationalists of much radical international sympathy, and grievously split the Indian Left, Communists from the Congress Socialists. A repeat performance, in a transformed post-war world where imperialism seemed on retreat everywhere, with a war-weary, enfeebled Britain under a Labour Government at least formally committed to more pro-Indian policies than Churchill, would be clearly far more difficult, if not impossible, to repress. The kind of Hindu-Muslim unity briefly displaced on the streets of Calcutta and Bombay had not been much in evidence in 1942, and, above all, the Indian army could no longer be relied on, after INA and the RIN revolt.

3. Government of India (War Department) to the Secretary of State, 11 August 1945—Mansergh, Volume VI, pp. 49-51.

4. Chapters 1 and 2.

5. Penderel Moon, ed., Wavell, *Viceroy's Journal*, (London, 1973), Appendix IV, pp. 485-6.

6. *Ibid.*, title to chapter VIII.

7. In Calcutta during 22-3 November, for instance, "the crowds when fired on largely stood their ground or at most receded only a little, to return again to the attack." Bengal Governor R.G. Casey to Wavell, 2 January 1946, summarizing the report of Calcutta Police Commissioner on the November disturbances—Mansergh, vol. VI, pp. 724-7.

8. *Viceroy's Journal*, p. 485.

Clearly, popular militancy made major concessions advisable from the point of view of officialdom. A week after the Calcutta outbursts against the first INA trial, New Delhi informed London that "abstract justice must to some extent give way to expediency": the earlier scenario of at least 2–300 INA accused and perhaps 40–50 death sentences would have to be abandoned.⁹ But what made that ultimate trajectory feasible, and eventually irresistible, was that the bulk of the nationalist leadership also seems to have felt that they, too, were on the edge of a volcano. The fear of popular 'excesses', not so much of violence (there was no lack of that in 1942) as of anti-British militancy spilling over into pressures for unacceptable social change, probably helped to make dominant political groups—more precisely, the Congress High Command—cling to the path of negotiation and compromise. Wavell recognized that the November events constituted a "turning point", which caused "at least a temporary détente",¹⁰ and several officials wrote in their private correspondence that Indian business was pressing for restraint: "The strong capitalist element behind Congress.... Is becoming nervous about the security of its property."¹¹ During the RIN upsurge, S.K. Patil and Chundrigar, heads of the Bombay Presidential units of the Congress and the Muslim League, displayed a rare unanimity in "offering the help of volunteers to assist the police."¹² Vallabhbhai Patel argued that: "... discipline in the army cannot be tampered with We will want army even in free India."¹³ and even Gandhi thought that the ratings had set: "a bad and unbecoming example for India ... A combination between Hindus and Muslims and others for the purpose of violent action is unholy."¹⁴

In a rejoinder to the Mahatma's comment that today appears tragically prophetic, Aruna Asaf Ali declared that it would be far easier "to unit Hindus and Muslims at the barricade than on the constitutional front."¹⁵ It is tempting to argue that there was a direct connection between the nationalist leadership's choice of the path of compromise, and the eventual acceptance of Partition as a necessary price. 1947 would see the paradox of a 'peaceful' transfer of power, accompanied by enormous bloodshed and human suffering. If the British had been forced to give up tentative plans for holding on to political power, the logically opposite scenario of radical united mass actions forcing an unqualified Imperial retreat also did not materialize.

At least one specific, surprisingly little-noticed link may be suggested between the Congress choice in early 1946 of negotiation rather anti-colonial struggle, and the eventual unavoidability of Partition. The provincial legislatures elected in early 1946, as well as the Constituent Assembly later formed from them by indirect election, were chosen on the basis of the 1935 franchise of around ten per cent of the adult population. A clear disjunction had manifested itself between the marked Hindu-Muslim unity on the streets of winter 1945–6, and the predominantly communal voting during the same months by the enfranchised minority, with the Congress getting 91.3 per cent of the votes in the general seats, but the League obtaining 86.6 per cent of the Muslim votes. In its talks with the Cabinet Mission, the Congress in its eagerness for a

9. Governor General (War Department) to Secretary of State, 30 November 1945—Mansergh, vol. VI, p. 572.

10. Wavell to George VI, 31 December 1945—Mansergh, vol. VI, p. 713.

11. Finance Member Rowlands, 17 November, quoted in *Viceroy's Journal*, p. 185. Both just before, and after, the Calcutta events similar estimates of Indian business attitude were made by H. Dow, Governor of Sind, on 3 November, and Pethick-Lawrence, the Secretary of State, on 30 November. Mansergh, vol. VI, pp. 438, 572.

12. Bombay Governor Colville to Wavell, 27 February 1946—Mansergh, vol. VI, pp. 1081–2.

13. Durga Das, ed., *Sardar Patel's Correspondence*, vol. IV (Ahmedabad, 1973), pp. 162–3, 165.

14. Gandhi conveyed his views through a statement to the press, 23 February 1946, published in *Haryana* 3 March 1946, and reprinted in Mahatma Gandhi, *Collected Works*, vol. LXXXIII (New Delhi, 1981), p. 171. *Free Press Journal*, 25 February 1946; carried Aruna Asaf Ali's rejoinder. For more details about this controversy, see l.vi.a. 22, 26, 27.

15. See l.vi.a. 25.

quick negotiated transfer of power quietly abandoned what had been a central political plank since the mid-1930s, Constituent Assembly elected by universal franchise. In fact only the Communists still made that demand in the Cabinet Mission talks.¹⁶ More came to be involved here than a question of abstract democratic principle. The League eventually won its demand for Pakistan without its claim to represent the majority of Muslims being really tested, either in fully democratic elections, or (as Congress claims had repeatedly been) in sustained mass movements in the face of official repression (as distinct from occasional communal riots often accompanied by official complicity). Counterfactuality should not be pressed too far, but it may not be irrelevant to recall that the Congress after 1947 would win all-India democratic elections uninterrupted till 1977, while the League was routed in East Pakistan in the very first vote held on universal suffrage in 1954, and failed to provide political stability even in West Pakistan.

By explanations in terms of the failures—or worse—of the nationalist leadership alone, amounting to a conspiracy thesis and coming close to an argument of élite betrayal of otherwise irresistible pressures from below, must remain unsatisfactory. There is a need to probe also the limits of popular anti-colonial nationalism. Not only limits, but alternative directions, that demand qualification of any simplistic valorization of all kinds of subaltern initiatives. For from August 1946 onwards the phenomena of masses outstripping leaders manifested itself most prominently in communal riots spinning out of control. Jinnah, it has been argued, had initially looked upon the Pakistan demand primarily as a bargaining counter, with which to wrest concessions from the Congress and the British, but beyond a point the slogan acquired a momentum of its own. Apparently uncontrollable violence, spurred on by communal outfits like the League National Guard and the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh but extending much beyond the reach of organizations, made Partition eventually unavoidable.

Nor should the British 'contribution' be forgotten. In June 1946, officials had been making plans to bring five army divisions into India in the event of another major Congress-led anti-British upsurge.¹⁷ No such move was made when the awesome tragedy of unprecedented communal violence unfolded from August 1946. Rather, Wavell rejected suggestions for aerial bombardment to stop the Bihar riots, even "though the Muslims point out, rather embarrassingly, that we did not hesitate to use it in 1942."¹⁸ In March 1947, the two major bazaars of Amritsar would be destroyed while "not a shot was fired by the police"—and this in the city of Jallianwalabagh.¹⁹

The undeniably 'popular' nature of the bulk of the 'riots', and the high degree of tacit sympathy for them among large sections of both communities, is an indication of the depth of penetration of communal sentiments and ways of thinking into everyday 'common sense'. This had remained a largely unexplored domain for historians till the shock of the apparently sudden and inexplicable rise to predominance of chauvinistic Hindutva nationalism in the late 1980s and 1990s. The subsequent surge in research on these themes, both in India and abroad, is now making clearer the cultural and political forms of this penetration and ideological spread. The patient, molecular, 'educational' and 'cultural' work of the RSS from 1925 onwards spread the core message of Hindutva among large numbers of small town, lower middle class

16 P.C. Joshi's talks with the Cabinet Mission, 17 April 1946, Mansergh, vol. VII, pp. 291–3.

17 Mansergh, Volume VIII, pp. 13–15.

18 *Viceroy's Journal*, p. 373.

19 Penderel Moon, *Divide and Quit* (London, 1971), pp. 75–81.

but upper caste young men, through its combination of physical training and games -- recreational facilities rare in such mileus--and '*bauddhik*' (intellectual) sessions in an expanding networks of *shakhas* across the Hindi-speaking parts of the subcontinent, and sometimes beyond. There was some penetration also of the South, notably Karnataka. The apparent aloofness of the RSS from open political activities and institutional politics meant that official data about them remained scantier than the importance of the phenomenon deserved, but an indication is provided in a Home Political department file providing data about the respective strength and spread of various volunteer organizations. Here the RSS is mentioned as the biggest, with about 100,000 in its *shakhas* towards the end of 1947, followed by the League Muslim National Guard. The Congress, despite its unassailable position as the premier and by far the most influential national political force, lagged well behind in terms of volunteers.²⁰ Congress organization at grassroots level had always waxed and waned greatly over time, expanding rapidly during major campaigns like Non-Cooperation and Civil Disobedience but lethargic and quiescent in more 'normal' years, and the concentration on high-level negotiations along during 1946 therefore also contributed to inadequacy in confronting both Muslim and Hindu communalism from August 1956 onwards.

The ideology propagated through the RSS *shakhas* was grounded in V.D. Savarkar's *Hindutva: Who Is A Hindu?* (1923). The only true nationalist, Savarkar argued, was one for whom *pitrabhoomi* and *punyabhoomi*, fatherland and holy-land was identical, with the latter equated entirely with the place of origin of the faith. Diversities within the Hindu fold were unimportant, since all the variants originated within 'Bharat' --and being irrelevant, could be ignored or forgotten in face of the external enemy. This provided as easy way for avoiding ticklish issues of caste, gender, or class tensions within Hindu society. Conversely, the loyalties of Muslims and Christians (and of Communists, Golwalkar, the second boss of the RSS would add) were suspect, since the origin of their faiths lay outside the country. Savarkar went on to draw a lurid picture of a thousand year old war between Muslim invaders and Hindus, projecting assumptions of an inevitable and overriding conflict more vital than any other problem facing India. A text written just four years after Jallianwalabagh, by an ex-revolutionary nationalist who had once suffered imprisonment for his anti-British activities in the Andamans, hence remained virtually silent about British political and economic domination, and had no words to spare for mass poverty or internal class, caste or gender tensions. What added to the danger posed by such an ideology, broadly shared by the RSS with the more conventionally organized political formation of the Hindu Mahasabha with which Savarkar himself was directly connected, was that the mentalities and culture of a large section of the Congress was not too different, despite the secular anti-communalism of the leadership. A broad 'common-sense' had developed over the years, where certain stereotypes about the Muslim 'Other' had come to be internalized by large sections of the middle and lower middle classes, particularly perhaps the small-town vernacular elites in the north and central Indian Hindi belt. The Muslim was imagined as virile, powerfully male, and ever-aggressive, always eager to abduct and rape Hindu women, and engaged in a longer-term project of demographic conquest through marrying many times and breeding faster. The Hindu in contrast was allegedly timid, weak, and much too peaceful, who needed the physical culture and semi-martial training that the RSS could provide. From this logic followed a deep hatred for Gandhi, and his murderer Nathuram Goodse (once a

20. See Chapter 2.1.2 and 3.

member of the RSS and close to Savarkar) at his trial would denounce the ideology of non-violence as effeminate.

The mid- and late-1940s provided fertile soil for the spread of such assumptions and mentalities, for they seemed to be justified and made necessary by the mirror-image of similar thinking and practices provided by the simultaneous growth of Muslim communalism. The Muslim League, and notably Jinnah, had a varied and chequered history, and only in the late-1930s and 1940s came to stand for uncompromising Muslim communalism, as crystallized through the Pakistan call for a partition of the country between allegedly totally distinct Hindu and Muslim 'nations'. Muslim opinion was deeply divided for long—just as Hindutva by no means represented the whole of the Hindu community—and Jinnah had considerable difficulties in establishing his position as 'sole spokesman' of Indian Muslims in face to strong opposition from many political groups in Punjab, Bengal, and elsewhere. By 1946, his League with its Pakistan slogan was able, however, to establish what might have been an only temporary but decisive hegemonic position. Once again, stereotypes about Hindus had percolated into the common-sense of many Muslims—as dominant through money-power and chicanery over the brave but simple-hearted followers of Islam. Jinnah, himself hardly a devout person, made much use of a religious appeal during the 1946 elections and beyond, notably in the Panjab countryside where he was able to rally certain *ulema* groups—even though the Deobandis, in most ways deeply conservative, remained firmly opposed to Pakistan and loyal to the Congress. A degree of agrarian populism also came in very handy, helped by the fact, very obvious in East Bengal and to some extent in the Panjab, that the bulk of the landlords, traders, and moneylenders were Hindus while Muslims were mostly peasants.

The Left, both Communists and Socialist, might appear to be the heroes of my narrative so far, for they had firmly supported and to some extent helped to organize the anti-British upsurge of the winter of 1945–6, in sharp contrast to the Congress leadership. As we have seen, Patel had denounced the RIN ratings, Gandhi more or less echoed that disapproval, and Nehru, too, made a few sympathetic noises but then fell into line. Where the Left had its main limitation was, however, on the communal question. Not that they did not fight the riots, often very heroically as many of the documents in this volume will indicate: the Calcutta Dacres Lane headquarters of the Communist Party in Bengal, for instance, was reputed to have been the one place in the city where Hindus and Muslims could live together in perfect safety during the riots of 1946 and beyond. But there seems to have been a serious misrecognition of the depth of the problem, more specifically of the need to fight over a long time-span the cultural dimensions of communalism. There was instead an economistic simplification of the issues, an expectation that the problem would wither away given the development of effective class actions grounded on 'real' material issues. Not that that expectation was always belied: many documents in the volume of the post-August months will bear witness to numerous united actions of workers and peasants despite and in the midst of communal riots. The Left in fact often did much more in practice than was spelled out in their theory as formulated in Party documents. As the flood of refugees from East Pakistan swelled over the years after 1947 for instance, the Bengal Communists took the lead in organizing their resettlement in the suburbs of Calcutta, thus helping to constitute what for a generation would be a firm base for the Left—a work and a process that was done in the Delhi-East Panjab region by the RSS, with similar political consequences. Yet theory seriously lagged behind, as a glance at the documents of the second (Calcutta) Party Congress of February 1948 would indicate. A very militant, anti-Congress line was adopted, abruptly changing the trajectory of the Party in what later came to

be characterized as a Left-sectarian position, in sublime disregard of the problems of communalism weeks after the Mahatma had been murdered. The attitudes of the consistently secular, agnostic Nehru were rather similar. His statements on communalism down to the autumn of 1946 indicate an expectation that the problem was not, after all, all that serious: it would be eliminated through intensifying the struggles of workers and peasants, and/or by modernizing industrial development. His subsequent speeches in Bihar, included in the *Selected Works*, indicate what a deep and unexpected shock the spectacle of thousands of Congress peasant sympathizers turning killers of Muslim fellow-villagers overnight was to him.²¹ For Gandhi, in sharp contrast, the problems went far deeper. He seems to have felt, more and from much earlier than any other Indian politician or public figure, that Indian society had within it enormous possibilities of violent conflict, which British rule was sharpening but did not solely create. Perhaps here lay part of the explanation for an otherwise puzzling but seldom explored, taken-for-granted problem: the reason underlying his virtually obsessive insistence on non-violence.

Directly and British popular upsurges with all-India significance ebbed away after February 1946. But a largely-forgotten dimension of the months that followed, full of high-level negotiations and then massive Hindu-Muslim riots, however, is that the decline in directly anti-British mass actions not invariably connote either the end of popular militancy or its total transformation into fratricidal violence. Labour movements under predominantly Communist or Left leadership remained extremely formidable through much of 1946, particularly from around March to September, acquiring in some sectors a countrywide sweep that was quite unprecedented. Particularly striking was the advance in white-collar militancy and organization, typified by the postal strike of July 1946 which saw yet another manifestation of Hindu-Muslim solidarity on the streets, the great sympathy strike in Calcutta on 29 July—little more than two weeks before the beginning of the Great Calcutta Killings on 16 August. Peasant unrest was also mounting in some regions by the end of 1946—most notably, through the beginnings of the Tebhaga movement in Bengal of sharecroppers demanding two-thirds share in the products of their labour. A significant degree of unity in action across communal divides was still noticeable at such plebeian levels, even after Calcutta, Noakhali, and Bihar. That such militancy, in directly British-ruled India, was no longer often directly anti-government but focused on class rather than 'national' issues, did not necessarily indicate some kind of decline in political awareness. A feeling that British rule was coming to an end, and therefore the sorting-out of internal relationship between parties, groups, classes and communities had become a priority matter, had probably become quite widespread. (Paradoxically, of course, the same understanding contributed also to the communal 'sorting-out' of Hindu-Muslim relations, through what became a bloodbath.) The Congress, and in some regions the League, was well on the way of becoming the Raj, and political activity was consequently already taking on some of the contours of post-Independence times.

21. As late as 19 July 1942, Nehru could write: "Few problems in the world today are basically so simple of solution as the Indian minority problem.... The real problems of India are economic, the poverty and low standards. As soon as these are tackled aggressively ... and modern industry grows, bringing higher standards, the minority problem fades away." ('Can Indians get together', *New York Times Magazine*) Contrast this with the almost desperate tone of Nehru's speech at Fatwa, Bihar: "All of you are shouting Jai Hind and Long Live Revolution. But what sort of country do you want to build up? What kind of revolution are you trying to herald by all these communal disturbances that are prevailing in Bihar It is shameful that Hindus should try to kill a handful of Muslims who are living as their neighbours in the province ... I warn you that police will come and shoot you if you do not stop the murder, arson, and loot ..." Nehru, *Selected Works*, vol. XII, p. 521; *Selected Works*, Second Series, vol. I, p. 55.

In many parts of that third of the subcontinent that comprised Princely India, however, less 'developed' socio-economic and political structures were still contributing to much more obvious forms of directly anti-governmental mass militancy. A tight intermeshing of issues of civil rights, democracy, caste, class, and gender created potentials there, sometimes, for sweepingly radical 'anti-feudal' change. 1946, it should not be forgotten, was also the year that saw the beginnings of the Telengana peasant armed struggle in Hyderabad against landlordism and autocracy, the brief but very militant Punnappa-Vayalar upsurge in Travancore, and a powerful, predominantly Muslim, movement in Kashmir valley led by Sheikh Abdulla that was as yet entirely aligned with the Congress and strongly opposed to Pakistan. Here, once again, there were potentialities not ultimately realized.

The 1946 volume therefore devotes much space to labour and peasant struggles, and to movements in the Princely States. It also includes a section on subordinate-caste affirmations, some material about regional and linguistic trends, as well as a considerable mass of documentation about communal violence. All this might possibly surprise some, for events and processes like these were quite often not anti-British in any direct sense, and, in the case of communalism, certainly not conducive to the development of what is sometimes simplistically projected as a 'national movement' assumed to be unitary. It needs to be emphasized, however, that the project of which this volume is a part had been deliberately entitled 'Towards Freedom', and not, say, a series about a narrowly-conceived 'freedom movement' or 'nationalism'. Professor Gopal's Preface highlights the great social plurality and heterogeneity of the subcontinent, and emphasizes as "one common aim of the series "the documentation of the activities, attitudes and ideas of the diverse classes and sections of Indian society ..." In their immense variety and even conflict, as well as through never-entirely successful at unity, he point out, they can all be said to have "contributed to the attainment of Indian independence with partition"²²: an ambiguous product, in other words, not any simple attainment of freedom through transfer of power from British to Indian hands. Freedom had inevitably come to mean different thing to different peoples and groups, and the common habit of reducing the whole of Indian history to a simple confrontation of two homogenized blocs, imperialism vs nationalism, does little justice to the complexity and richness of our recent past.

Once again, what is involved, is not just an opening up of neglected areas in additive manner. Placed in the context of longer-term later-colonial developments from at least 1920s onwards, labour and peasant movements, unrest in the Princely States, the more-or-less simultaneous and interpenetrating development of a number of conflicting identities --class, communal-religious, caste, regional, tribal, alongside of 'national'-- all contributed, if often in tension-ridden, conflictual ways, to the specifics of postcolonial structures in the subcontinent.

Perhaps my argument can be illustrated best by a glance at debates around the Aims and Objects resolution that Nehru placed before the first session of the Constituent Assembly on 13 December 1946.²³ The immediate context was almost wildly unpropitious. The Assembly, chosen indirectly from provincial legislatures themselves elected by only a tenth of the adult population, had been made even more undemocratic in composition by the Muslim League boycotting its meetings. Escalating rounds of communal violence were rapidly undermining the Cabinet Mission's plan for a loose federation which had provided the initial legal base of the Constituent Assembly itself, while the mover of the Resolution headed a deeply-divided,

22. S. Gopal, 'General Editor's Preface', in Partha Sarathi Gupta, ed. *Towards Freedom 1943-44*, Delhi, 1997, p. vii.

23. See Chapter 2 ii, debate.

weak, and unstable Interim Government. And yet the Aims and Objects Resolution became the germs of the Preamble to a Constitution that eventually emerged as democratic, secular, federal, and grounded in some notions of 'social justice' in distinctive interrelated ways, and that has now lasted for well over half a century.

Much has often been made in a particular tradition of 'liberal' scholarship of the fairly obvious continuities between the Constitution and late-colonial reforms, notably the Government of India Act of 1935: it may be helpful at times to ponder more about the ruptures. Democracy based on universal suffrage, totally rejecting qualifications of property, education, or gender constituted for a start the sharpest possible break with colonial Indian theory and practice, for the British had rejected it till the very end. Nor had the Congress itself started quite in this way, for the early Moderate demands did not go beyond limited extensions of voting rights. An initial protest against the partition of Bengal, for instance, had cited Edmund Burke to define public opinion as the views of men with leisure, means of information, and a position "above menial dependence."²⁴ The change was clearly related to the sheer sweep of anti-colonial mass movements in post-1919 India, of which the winter of 1946 witnessed a final round. The net result had been a quite exceptional degrees of politicization, vestiges of which can still surprise external observers despite much disillusionment and cynicism. A restricted franchise would clearly have courted trouble and wide unpopularity. In addition, the experience of Gandhian mass movements seemed to show that the latter were both effective, and controllable by its leaders, as the abrupt withdrawals of struggles in 1922 and again in 1931 had caused resentment but had been generally accepted. The phenomenon of what after all was a fairly elite and propertied Assembly making the 'leap in the dark' of universal franchise may have had something to do also with this self-confidence.

Politicization, it needs to be emphasized, had not flowed through a single or unitary channel, but along diverse, quite often contradictory paths, some of which has been condemned at times as 'divisive' by 'mainstream' nationalist discourses. These amounted to different kinds of solidarities or identities-in formation, never hermetically sealed off from each other but interpenetrating and intercutting: part-autonomous tribal, peasant, labour, and Left movements, subordinate caste and Dalit affirmations, women's pressure-groups, the resistance to centralizing or unitary drives in the name of minority-religious and regional solidarities. The 1946 Volume, as already indicated, will highlight such divergent pressures, which in fact continued, sometimes in enhanced manner, into the early years of independent India--and beyond.

The presence of such diverse strands help to explain the content and particular ordering of basic principles that Nehru enunciated on 13 December 1946, and that would subsequently be enshrined in the Preamble. 'Justice, social, economic and political' was placed, first, followed by 'equality of status, of opportunity, and before the law'; only then came 'freedom of thought, expression, belief, faith, worship, vocation, association and action, subject to law and public morality.' The ordering was significantly different from those followed in most Western liberal-democratic constitutions or statements of principle.²⁵ The prioritization of social justice

24. 'One of the People', *An Open Letter to Curzon* (Dacca, April 1904), enclosed in Government of India Home Public Proceedings April 1904 n. 39.

25. The English revolution of the 17th century had linked to talk of life, liberty, and property; the Americans in 1776 of life, liberty and pursuit of happiness, preceded by an assertion of human equality (which however went along with the retention of slavery for nearly a century); the French formula, of course, was liberty, equality and fraternity.

owed something to the ideals of socialism which in 1946 seemed ascendant on a world scale.²⁶ Even more evident was the link with specifically Indian realities, in particular the Dalit force that Ambedkar had built up, and the general discrediting of caste discrimination. The paragraph I have cited from the Aims and Objects Resolution was followed immediately by the assurance that 'adequate safeguards will be provided for minorities, backwards and tribal areas, and depressed and other backward classes.' The concrete expression of the principle of social justice would be reservations for historically underprivileged groups—Dalits and tribals, much later extended to intermediate Other Backward Castes, plus certain provisions for a limited degree of labour and pro-peasant reforms.

The recognition of diversities, of the inevitably multiple and non-homogeneized nature of alternatives to colonial domination, is vital also for understanding the integral connections in the Indian context of democracy with federalism and secularism. The origins of Indian federalism have often been sought in rather over-formal ways in later colonial British constitutional experiments. Colonial rule, which in the interests of domination and exploitation had integrated the subcontinent far more tightly than ever before, had also begun to feel the need for a measure of decentralization for financial and administrative efficiency by the later nineteenth century. In the context of Secretary of State Montagu's promise in 1917 of eventual responsible government, and the growing impossibility of postponing some amount of implementation of that promise amidst massive nationalist movements, the British took recourse first to 'dyarchy', and later to provincial autonomy. Basically, these were instruments through which the necessary conciliation of nationalist could be combined with retention of effective overall control. The 'federal' aspects of the 1935 Act, similarly, had as their principal aim the deployment of loyal Indian princes to offset the rising tide of nationalist pressures for responsible government in the Centre. It needs to be emphasized, therefore, that despite the many verbal similarities between the 1935 Act and the Constitution of independent India, a major rupture had taken place—and one that may be quite closely related to the kind of developments in the princely states that the 1946 Volume has sought to highlight. The federation envisaged in 1935 has been a combination of responsibility-governed British Indian provinces with still-autocratic princely states, their borders and political regimes unchanged. That which was to emerge by 1949 would be based on a destruction of most of these borders, through the integration of princely states and uniform application of democratic principles of governance. A decisive change had been brought about, through a varying combination of skilful pressures from above, masterminded by Sardar Patel, and popular movements from below. Here some of the aborted radical trends and apparent failures of 1946 were not unproductive of important consequences. Punnappa-Vayalar helped to block Dewan C.P. Ramaswamy Iyer's plan for an independent Travancore ruled under an 'American model' for an executive nominated by the Maharaja, while the armed struggle of Telengana peasants surely contributed to the destruction of the Nizam of Hyderabad's dream of autocratic independence. In Kashmir, too, the powerful National Conference movement of summer 1946, then closely allied with the Congress, contributed to the eventual accession to India and the beating-back of raiders backed by Pakistan. Things, of course, changed radically latter: but the primary responsibility for that lies with the

26. Nehru reflected that mood—as often, in general principles and rhetoric mode than in action—when he declared while moving the Resolution of 13 December: "Well, I stand for Socialism and, I hope, India will stand for Socialism and that India will go towards the Constitution of a Socialist State and I do believe that the whole world will have to go that way." See Chapter 2.ii.

excessively centralizing efforts of Delhi to impose a uniform pattern of 'integration', violating the terms of accession agreed on the 1947 with this overwhelmingly Muslim-majority region.

It needs to be emphasized also that much before British federal plans, Indian leaders like Bepinchandra Pal had started emphasizing the need for a "composite nationalism". A discourse of 'unity in diversity' had become standard in mature Indian nationalist circles by the 1930s, in the twin contexts of deepening Hindu-Muslim conflicts and growth of linguistic-regional identities. This involved a recognition of a plurality of religions, languages and cultures, and logically favoured federalism rather than any totally centralized polity. But the 'unity in diversity' formula has remained open to divergent formulas, ranging from centralist stresses on 'fundamental unity'—which sometimes tends to equate 'Indian' with 'Hindu' (and operationally, high-caste Hindu) culture—to much more decentralized, federal versions. The Constituent Assembly proceedings, some extracts from which have been included in this volume, illuminate this tension at the heart of Indian federalism in ways that remain deeply relevant today. The Aims and Objects resolution in fact promised residual powers to the provinces, not to the Centre; but for many this was clearly an unpleasant by-product of the need in December 1946 to work formally within the contours of the Cabinet Mission Plan. Some aggressively centralist speeches were made in the sessions of 9–23 December 1946, notably for instance by the Hindu Mahasabha leader Shyamaprasad Mukherji. The Mountbatten Plan of Partition of June 1947, was followed almost immediately by moves that made India into a Federation with an exceptionally strong Centre, where residual powers were now firmly located.

If Indian democracy and federalism have been primarily rooted in the imperatives of mass anti-colonial struggle across a highly diverse subcontinent, where many other solidarities were being simultaneously constituted, so too is secularism. And, once again, some of the documents included in this volume can help to illuminate its evolution and significance. The Constituent Assembly was made up overwhelmingly of Congress members, all but a handful of them Hindus, and quite often pious, or at least quite conventional ones at that. The speeches made by some of them in the initial session, together with some of the evidence in the chapter on Communalism, particularly from provinces like Bihar, provide ample indications that there was no very sharp dividing line between large numbers of Congressmen and the followers of the Hindu Mahasabha or the RSS, despite the top leadership's rejection of all forms of communalism. But no doubt! most realized the folly of proclaiming India a Hindu state, for in the wake of the terrible riots of 1946–7, with Muslims even after Partition comprising a very substantial minority of the population, that would have been a recipe for endless violence and civil war. But the presence in leading positions of the Congress of men and women committed to anti-communalism as a matter of principle, typified above all, though in very different ways, by Gandhi and Nehru, was also vitally important.

It is relevant to remind ourselves at this point that, contrary to much 'anti-secularist' polemic today, 'secular' as the term had come to be used in India from the 1920s onwards, has had little or nothing to do with anti-, or non-religious attitudes (the latter, in the main, characterized Nehru, but obviously not the deeply pious Hindu Gandhi). Nor was it equivalent often with even markedly 'rationalist' views: a detachment in the Indian context of 'secularism' from rationalistic 'disenchantment' of the world which has been a source of strength, though also of some weakness, of the Indian variant. The basic referent here has been, and remains, the rejection of 'communalism'. That, too, is a very specific Indian usage, referring not to all forms of community affiliations or identities, but to those that claim to be religious, and assume hostility between religious groups to be both inevitable and of paramount importance.

Secularism in this sense emerged as a response to deepening conflict between identities defined by religion, that had become endemic and fairly continuous since the mid-1920s, but reached their climax from August 1946.

The documents in this volume, inevitably and tragically, will illustrate communal violence at its most inhuman form. But they will also be seen to contain occasional recognitions, among some Hindus and Muslims alike, that the country and its people could only survive on the basis of toleration, and secularism, in this limited but profoundly important sense. There was Gandhi, above all, pursuing his lonely and heroic path in the villages of Noakhali—but also other much lesser-known instances of resistance to communal violence which deserve to be rescued from oblivion. Our volume has tried to give as much coverage as possible to such alternative voices.

III

Within the broad parameters that I have just outlined, the selection of documents for this volume have been governed by two principles: a desire to avoid repeating what has already been published in readily accessible forms, and an understanding that the *Towards Freedom* series constitute not of books of readings, but collections of largely unpublished material meant primarily for research scholars or reference work. 'Readers' typically combine authorial interpretation with extracts from documents 'covering' all relevant aspects of a problem or period in a manner reasonably comprehensive and so helpful for teachers or advanced students. A hypothetical book of historical readings for 1946, for instance, would have necessarily included some documents about the Cabinet Mission, and is likely to have contained many extracts from speeches or writings of Gandhi, Nehru, Patel, or Jinnah, however well-known or readily accessible. The 1946 Volume on the whole excludes both, for there seems little point in repeating what is already there in the Mansergh collection—quite excellent, within the limits set by that project—or of reproducing large chunks from, say, the *Collected Works* of Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru's *Selected Works*, or the published collections pertaining to Patel or Jinnah.

The Mansergh volumes provide impressively comprehensive coverage of the highest level of official documentation, particularly the correspondence between the Viceroy and the Secretary of State, and between the provincial governors and the Viceroy, as well as the private papers of some of these top officials. Concentrating entirely on publishing material from the Public Record Office, India Office Library, and other repositories in Britain, what they do not do is to significantly enter the vast Indian official collections at the national and various state archives; only parts of which had been transmitted to London. Two series at the National Archives have been particularly helpful in providing official documentation for our volume: the Home Political Proceedings of the Government of India, and, for Part 2 which deals with Princely India, the Crown Representative Records. The first, of course, is well-known to all researchers of later-colonial Indian history, but the second seems to have been surprisingly little-used so far. The coverage of the State Archives have been more patchy, reflecting both the variegated nature of archival preservation and accessibility, and problems of collection. But, thanks mainly to the material supplied to us from time to time by the National Archives, the volume includes extracts from the archival documents of Delhi, Punjab, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh (i.e., for what was in 1946 Central Provinces and Berar, along with a number of princely states later incorporated into Madhya Pradesh), Rajasthan (with rich collections from, in particular, the former princely states of Jodhpur, Jaipur, and Udaipur), Gujarat (for

Baroda), Karnataka (for Mysore), Tamil Nadu (for Madras Presidency), and Kerala (the Cellar records at Tiruvananthapuram, for the states of Travancore and Cochin).

A major aim of the *Towards Freedom* has been to collect and publish non-official, Indian material almost entirely excluded for the Mansergh volumes. For 1946, it will be seen, Indian newspapers have proved exceptionally helpful, quite often providing information about developments lightly covered or even absent from official documentation. Here, or obvious reasons of space, there could be no question of trying to be comprehensive. Selection has been governed by accessibility, as well as a desire to include material from different regions and political standpoints. In general, news reports proved far more helpful than editorial comments, which tend to be predictable. The extracts come mainly from *Hindustan Times* (Delhi), *Statesman* (Calcutta), *Bombay Chronicle* and *Free Press Journal* (Bombay), and *Peoples' Age*, weekly organ of the Communist Party of India (Bombay). The last deserves particular mention for its rich coverage of, not only labour and peasant movements, but princely states and anti-communal initiatives. The exceptionally high journalistic quality of much of its reportage is a reminder of how much intellectual talent the Left had been able to attract in those times.

The papers of some leading organizations have constituted a third major source of documentation. It is probably an indicator of changing times—the Congress in British India becoming the party of government rather than of agitation, but political militancy attaining new heights in many princely states—that for 1946 the All India Congress Committee files proved less useful than they would certainly have been in earlier years. The All India States Peoples Conference Papers, in significant contrast, have been a rich and largely unexplored mine of data. In combination with the Crown Representative Records, these have helped to make Part 2 of the volume probably the richest section in terms of really new material. The All India Trade Union Congress files have been very informative about labour news, and use has been made also of the papers of the Hindu Mahasabha and the All India Women's Conference.

Collections of private papers, finally: the Nehru Memorial Library and the National Archives between them allowed us to make ample use of those of B.R. Ambedkar, M.R. Jayakar, Harekrushna Mahatab, Jayaprakash Narayan, C. Rajagopalachari, Sahajananda Saraswati, and Purushottamdas Thakurdas.

The major, unfortunately unavoidable, limitation of the volume is that despite the focus on the unofficial-indigenous which constitutes the main difference between it and the Mansergh series, it consists overwhelmingly of English-language material. The language-resources at the command of our team would have enabled use of material in Hindi, Bengali, and possibly of a couple of other north Indian languages, but not of vernacular material from the South. This could have produced serious imbalances, and in any case a major extension into the massive vernacular material would have required translation facilities beyond the reach of the project.

In arranging the material, the strictly chronological order followed in the Mansergh volumes—which basically use only in one kind of source—proved impossible for us, for our documents are far more variegated and heterogeneous. A combination, in sometimes changing formats, of subject-wise classification and chronology has been found more helpful. The 1946 Volume consists of two Parts, 1 and 2, dealing with British India and the Princely India respectively. Part 1 is divided into five chapters: Anti-British Protests, Political Organizations, Labour and Peasants, Communalism, and Economy and Society. The first four headings are self-explanatory. The inevitably much more heterogeneous and somewhat scattered material in 'Economy and Society' has been further sub-divided thematically into Economic Conditions, Caste (unexpectedly abundant material here, with 69 documents), Regional Issues, Women

and Freedom, and Culture. In Part 2, Princely India, a general chapter is followed by a geographical arrangement: Kashmir and Northern States, Hyderabad; Travancore and the South; Western Indian States; Central India States; and Eastern and North-Eastern India States. The chapters are further sub-divided, into individual states. In both parts, a chronological arrangement has been followed within each chapter or sub-division.

Introduction apart, editorial interpretation and intervention has been kept to a minimum, for, once again, this is meant to be a collection of source-materials, not a book of readings illustrating a particular line of argument. Brief introductory comments, however, have been inserted at the beginning of each chapter explaining the choice and arrangement of materials. In addition, the documents have been given descriptive headings, which appear, along with the details of source and date, before each item. To facilitate quick overviews and ready references these have been collated at the beginning of the volume, making the Contents into what amounts to a check-list of the documents.

Brief indications have been given, however, of the positions held by the large number of officials whose correspondence with each other makes up the bulk of all official documentation, and in some cases such notices have been appended in the text also concerning lesser-known Indian names. But total comprehensiveness was both unfeasible and unnecessary: including brief notes about figures like Gandhi, Nehru, Patel, or Jinnah, in a volume likely to be read only by scholars or advanced students, would serve little purpose. For more information about holders of key official positions, which sometimes changed at quick intervals, the reader may turn to the appropriate volumes of Mansergh, each of which has a section entitled Principal Holders of Office.

IV

The credit for the presentable corpus of material that eventually emerged goes, above all, to my principal Research Associate, Krishan Dhillon, who collected the vast majority of the documents and helped enormously in the difficult work of arranging and providing the headings for them, as well as preparing the detailed List of Contents. Without Krishan, very literally, there would have been no 1946 Volume.

For collection of documents, my thanks go also to the others who have worked in the research team for the 1946 Volume at various times: Pradeep Mandav, Manjit Singh Gandhi, A.K. Mohanty, Ashwaraj Kumar, A.K. Gaa, D. Srinivas, and Rajesh Kumar.

The repositories from where the materials have been collected have been mentioned in the headings to the documents. The bulk, of course, has come from the National Archives, various States Archives, and the Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Our financial resources did not permit any material collection from repositories abroad, like the India Office Library (now part of the British Library) in London. But then these had been extensively mined by the Mansergh volumes. Our thanks to the authorities and staff of these and all the other libraries.

I am grateful to Dr S.R. Bakshi for much helpful advice and information about documents.

A special word of thanks must go to Dr Basudev Chatterji, Coordinating Editor of the Series for many years, for cutting through many bureaucratic tangles and for his invaluable advice on many occasions.

Till his untimely passing-away, the presence of Professor Gopal as General Editor was throughout tremendously inspiring and invaluable. My thanks also to Professor Sabyasachi

Bhattacharya, who took over as General Editor upon resumption of work on completion of the project in 2005.

And finally, my thanks to the many who came forward, in solidarity and protest, when the *Towards Freedom* Project was halted in February 2000, and whose support has helped to make its resumption possible now.

SUMIT SARKAR

Abbreviations

ABMSL	All-Bengal Muslim Students' League
AHF	Azad Hind Fauj
AICC	All India Congress Committee
AIHS	All India Hindu Sabha (often used as an alternative to All India Hindu Mahasabha)
AIR	All India Reporter (authorized report of Court cases) <i>or</i> All India Radio
AISCF	All India Scheduled Castes' Federation
AITUC	All India Traders Union Congress
API	Associated Press of India
B&A	Bengal and Assam
BEST	Bombay Electricity Supply and Tramway
BO	British Officer
BOR	British Other Rank
BPSF	Bengal Provincial Students' Federation
CIO	Criminal Investigating Officer
CNA	Controller of Naval Accounts
CO	Commanding Officer
CP	Central Provinces
CPI	Communist Party of India
CPO	Chief Petty Officer
CSP	Congress Socialist Party
Com	Communist
CrPC	Criminal Procedure Code
DCC	District Congress Committee
DEST	Delhi Electric Supply and Tramway
DHQ	Defence Headquarters
DIR	Defence of India Rules
DMI	Director of Military Intelligence
FB	Forward Block
GHQ	General Head Quarters
GS Branch	General Staff Branch
HM	Home Member
HRA	Hindustan Red Army
ICI	Imperial Chemical Industries
ICS	Indian Civil Service
INA	Indian National Army (of Subhas Bose)
IOR	Indian Other Rank
ISC	Indian Signal Corp
Ind Pro Con	Independent Pro-Congress

LI	Light Infantry
MARC	Mahila Atma Raksha Samiti
MIO	Military Intelligence Officer
ML	Muslim League
MLA	Member Legislative Assembly
MPSA	Madhya Pradesh State Archives
ML-u-Syed	Muslim League Under Syed
NAI	National Archives of India
NLMP	Non League Muslim Party
NM	Nationalist Muslim
NMML	Nehru Memorial Museum and Library
NOIC	Naval Officer in Command
NWFP	North West Frontier Province
OC	Officer in-charge
PCC	Provincial Congress Committee
PO	Petty Officer
PWD	Public Work Department
RAF	Royal Air Force
RDP	Radical Democratic Party
RI	Rigorous Imprisonment
RIAF	Royal Indian Air Force
RIASC	Royal Indian Army Service Corps
RIN	Royal Indian Navy
RSPI	Revolutionary Socialist Party of India
RSS (also RSSS)	Rashtriya Swayamsevak (or Swayam Sevak) Sangh
RY Samiti	Rashtriya Yuwati Samiti
SC	Students' Congress
SCF	Scheduled Castes Federation
SGPC	Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee
SI	Sub-Inspector (of Police)
TNSA	Tamil Nadu State Archives (Madras)
UNO	United Nations Organization
UP	United Provinces
UPSA	Uttar Pradesh State Archives
WC	Working Committee

Calendar of Documents

PART 1: BRITISH INDIA

1. Anti-British Protests and Movements

1.i Army and People

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Pg No.</i>
1.	1.1.46	Role of the Armed Services During Transition to Self-Government	Letter by C.J.E. Auchinleck, Commander in Chief in India to all Commanding Officers, Royal Indian Navy, Indian Army and Royal Indian Air Force, New Delhi	File No. 62/46, Home(Political) Department, GOI, NAI 4
2.	21.2.46 22.2.46	Recruitment of British Officers into the Indian Civil Service and Indian Police	Extracts from a circular note made within the Home Department	File No. 9/46, Home (Establishments) Department, GOI, NAI 5
	11.1.46	Burning of Civilian Houses by Members of 6th Ganjam Civil Unit	Memorandum by E.F. McInerny, District Magistrate, Chittagong, to M.O. Carter, Commissioner, Chittagong	File No. 7/1/46, Home (Police) Department, GOI, NAI 7
4.	11.1.46	Clash Between Villagers and Pioneer Unit at Chittagong	Memorandum by M.O. Carter, Commissioner, Chittagong to Chief Secretary, Home Department, Govt. of Bengal	File No. 7/1/46 <i>op. cit.</i> 9
5.	2.2.46	Clash Between Villagers and 6th Ganjam Civil Labour Unit at Chittagong	Extracts from a memorandum by the Superintendent of Police, Chittagong, to the Assistant Inspector General of Police, Bengal	File No. 7/1/46 <i>op.cit.</i> 10

1.ii INA Trials

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Pg No.</i>
1.	5.1.46	Delhi Rally for Released INA Officers	Extracts from a news report, 'INA men to continue fight for freedom.'	<i>Hindustan Times</i> 12
2.	7.1.46	Bombay Welcomes INA Prisoners' Release	Extracts from a news report, 'Bombay citizens welcome INA heroes' release.'	<i>Free Press Journal</i> 12

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Pg No.</i>
3.	8.1.46	INA Soldier Denounces Communalism at Hindu Mahasabha reception	Extracts from a news report, 'Freedom only under Congress flag.'	<i>Free Press Journal</i> 13
4	15.2.46	Aruna Asaf Ali Spells Out Her Politics at Bombay	Extracts from a news report, 'We will organise and drive the British out.'	<i>Free Press Journal</i> 13
5.	16.2.46	Aruna Outlines Shape of Coming Struggle	Extracts from a news report, 'Underground commented: capitalists condemned.'	<i>Free Press Journal</i> 15

1.iii Disturbances in Bombay on Subhas Chandra Bose Day

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Pg No.</i>
1.	24.1.46	Muslims Object to S.C. Bose Day Procession Through Their Neighbourhoods	Telegram by the Special Branch, Bombay, to the Secretary of State for India, London	File No. 5/13/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 16
2.	26.1.46	Police Open Fire as Bose Day Celebrations Turn to Riots	Telegram by the Special Branch, Bombay, to the Secretary of State for India, London	File No. 5/13/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 16
3.	-	Processionists Refuse to Avoid Muslim Neighbourhoods	An undated and unsigned note.	File No. 24/3/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 17
4.	24.1.46	S.C. Bose Day Disturbances: <i>Hindustan Times</i> Report	News report, '10 killed in police firing in Bombay.'	<i>Hindustan Times</i> 18
5.	24.1.46	S.C. Bose Day Disturbances: <i>Dawn</i> Report	Extracts from <i>Dawn</i>	File No. 24/3/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 20
6.	25.1.46	Second Day of Bose Day Clashes in Bombay	Extracts from a news report, 'Repeated police firings in Bombay for the second day.'	<i>Free Press Journal</i> 21
7.	3.2.46	Contrasting Hindu-Muslim Attitudes to Bose Day Celebrations	Extracts from an article, 'Bombay Muslim reactions to Subhas Day.'	<i>People's Age</i> 24

1.iv Independence Day, 26 January 1946

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Pg No.</i>
1.	9.1.46	Celebration of 26 January 1946 as 'Independence Day'	The Congress 1946 Independence Pledge is from a clipping from <i>Hindustan Times</i> . The comments that follow	File No. 3/1/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 24

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Pg No.</i>
			are by A.E. Porter, Secretary, Home Department, GOI.	
2.	28.1.46	London Indians Protest Rally	News report, 'Police plague London demonstration also.'	<i>Free Press Journal</i> 26

1.v Abdul Rashid Day Demonstrations

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Pg No.</i>
1.	5.2.46	Abdul Rashid's Court- martial Upheld by Commander in Chief	Extracts from a news report, 'Capt. Rashid sentenced to seven years.'	<i>Hindustan Times</i> 27
2.	17.2.46	Abdul Rashid Day Demonstrations in Delhi	Extracts from a news report, 'Muslim hartal, meetings'. By wire from Y.D. Sharma.	<i>People's Age</i> 27
3.	13.2.46	Protests in Calcutta Against Abdul Rashid's Sentence	Extracts from a news report, 'Military called out in Calcutta.'	<i>Statesman</i> 28
4.	13.2.46	Maulana Azad Denounces Calcutta Riots	Extracts from a news report, 'Maulana Azad's appeal.'	<i>Statesman</i> 28
5.	13.2.46	Governor Casey Issues a Stern Warning to Protestors	Extracts from a telegram by the Governor of Bengal to the Viceroy	File No. 5/22/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 29
6.	13.2.46	Governor Casey Comes Down Hard on Lawless Elements	Extracts from a telegram by the Governor of Bengal, to the Viceroy	File No. 5/22/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 30
7.	13.2.46	Troubles Spread Out into Calcutta's Hinterland	Telegram by the Governor of Bengal to the Viceroy	File No. 5/22/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 30
8.	14.2.46	Governor Casey Tours Affected Areas of Calcutta	Telegram by the Governor of Bengal to the Viceroy	File No. 5/22/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 31
9.	14.2.46	Calcutta Counts its Casualties	Extracts from a telegram by the Governor of Bengal, to the Viceroy	File No. 5/22/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 31
10.	15.2.46	Troops Continue to Patrol Calcutta	Extracts from a Telegram by the Governor of Bengal, to the Viceroy	File No. 5/22/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 31
11.	18.2.46	Feelings Responsible for Calcutta Disturbances Continue to Smoulder	Extracts from a Telegram by the Governor of Bengal, to the Viceroy	File No. 5/22/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 31
12.	14.2.46	Congress, League Join Hands in Central Assembly	Extracts from a news report, 'Muslim League leaders handcuffed.'	<i>Statesman</i> 32

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Pg No.</i>
13.	18.2.46	Jinnah Criticises British Treatment of INA Prisoners	Extracts from a news report, 'Jinnah urges inquiry into firings.'	<i>Statesman</i> 32
14.	16.2.46	Meerut Muslims Protest Calcutta Firings	Extracts from a news report, 'Police open fire in Meerut.'	<i>Hindustan Times</i> 32
15.	19.2.46	Trains Burnt in Bengal	Extracts from a news report, 'Mobs burn 2 trains in protest against Calcutta firings.'	<i>Hindustan Times</i> 33
16.	28.2.46	Lahore Student Protests Against INA Convictions	Extracts from a news report, 'Governor's car stoned.'	<i>Hindustan Times</i> 33
17.	16.2.46	Government Explains Captain Rashid's Sentence	Extracts from an article, 'Brutal acts cannot be condoned.'	<i>Statesman</i> 34
18.	24.2.46	Communist-League-Congress Unite in Calcutta's Massive Demonstrations for Release of Abdul Rashid	Extracts from a news report, 'Calcutta students' demonstrations grows into big tide of Hindu-Muslim, anti imperialist unity', by wire from Nikhil Chakrabarti.	<i>People's Age</i> 34
19.	2.3.46	Leadership of All Political Parties Criticised	Extracts from an article, 'Wanted new leaders to lead new movements', Punvapriya Dasgupta.	<i>Free Press Journal</i> 38
20.	18.3.46	Question in House of Commons Regarding Church Damaged During Calcutta Disturbances	Question No. 6 asked in the House of Commons, London	File No. 58/1/46, Home (Police) Department, GOI, NAI 10
21.	3.4.46	Political Aspects of February Disturbances	Report by the Commissioner of Police, Calcutta	File No. 5/22/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 10

1.vi RIN Mutiny

(a) Disturbances in Bombay: Unofficial Perspectives

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Pg No.</i>
1.	7.1.46	Indian Airmen, not Allowed to Wear Khadi in Mess Halls, Go on Hunger Strike	News report, 'Indian airmen in city camp on hunger-strike.'	<i>Free Press Journal</i> 42
2.	8.1.46	Indian Troops Deserting Ranks in Indonesia	Extracts from a news report, 'Hundreds of Indian soldiers desert ranks.'	<i>Free Press Journal</i> 43
3.	19.2.46	Commander King's Racist Abuse of Indian Ratings Causes Strike	Extracts from a news report, 'Indian naval men in city on hunger strike.'	<i>Free Press Journal</i> 44

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Pg No</i>
4.	20.2.46	Question in Council of State About Racism in Royal Indian Air Force	Extracts from a news report, 'Allegations of racial discrimination in RIAF refuted.'	<i>Hindustan Times</i> 45
5.	20.2.46	Naval Strikers Fly Tricolour on RIN Vessels	Extracts from a news report, 'City naval strike spreads.'	<i>Free Press Journal</i> 46
6.	20.2.46	Aruna Asaf Ali Asks for Disciplined Strike Action	News report, 'Unity and discipline should be watchwords.'	<i>Free Press Journal</i> 46
7.	21.2.46	Indian Soldiers Unwilling to Mount Guard at Naval Establishments	Extracts from a news report, 'Armed guards at naval establishment.'	<i>Free Press Journal</i> 47
8.	21.2.46	RIN Strikes Spreads to Naval Headquarters, New Delhi	News report, 'Delhi naval men fall in line with Bombay strikers.'	<i>Free Press Journal</i> 47
9.	21.2.46	Central Strike Committee Demands Withdrawal of Armed Guard	News report, 'Maintain peace in face of provocation.'	<i>Free Press Journal</i> 47
10.	22.2.46	Bombay Communists Call for General Strike in Support of RIN Mutiny	News report, 'City Communists call for hartal.'	<i>Free Press Journal</i> 48
11.	22.2.46	British Call in Reinforcements to Quell Revolt	Extracts from a news report, 'All-out offensive planned to crush ratings' revolt.'	<i>Free Press Journal</i> 48
12.	22.2.46	Clashes Between Ratings and British Military Pickets	Extracts from a news report, 'Several ships at sea in the hands of ratings.'	<i>Free Press Journal</i> 50
13.	22.2.46	S.K. Patil Appeals for Normalcy	News report, 'Non-violence commended to RIN men facing fire.'	<i>Free Press Journal</i> 50
14.	22.2.46	Vallabhbhai Patel Appeals for Peace	Extracts from a news report, 'Patel calls for patience.'	<i>Free Press Journal</i> 51
15.	22.2.46	Central Strike Committee Asks for All-Party Support	Press release, 'Don't allow us to be crushed by British jackboot.'	<i>Free Press Journal</i> 52
16.	22.2.46	Bombay at the Barricades in Support of RIN Strikers	News report, 'Police open fire on city demonstrators.'	<i>Free Press Journal</i> 53
17.	22.2.46	Vice Admiral Godfrey Threatens Even Tougher Measures	News report, 'Admiral threatens to destroy the navy.'	<i>Free Press Journal</i> 54

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Pg No.</i>
18.	22.2.46	Jinnah Advocates Constitutional Means to Settle RIN Strike	Extracts from a news report, 'My services at disposal of RIN'	<i>Free Press Journal</i> 54
19	23.2.46	Heavy Use of Firearms to Quell Bombay Riots	Extracts from a news report, 'Demonstrators machine-gunned.'	<i>Free Press Journal</i> 55
20.	23.3.46	Naval Ratings Surrender on Vallabhbhai Patel's Advice	Extracts from a news report, 'Naval ratings agree to surrender arms.'	<i>Free Press Journal</i> 57
21.	23.2.46	Congress Moderates, Its Back-Bench in Central Assembly on Question of RIN Mutiny	Extracts from a news report, 'Less than 12,000 men involved in RIN mutiny.'	<i>Statesman</i> 58
22.	23.2.46	Hindu and Muslim Joining Hands for Violence is Unholy: M.K. Gandhi	Extracts from M.K. Gandhi's 'Statement to the Press'	<i>Harijan</i> 3 March 1946, and reprinted in his <i>Collected Works</i> , Vol. LXXXIII, (New Delhi, 1981), p. 171
23.	25.2.46	Bombay Uprising Begins to Subside	Extracts from a news report, 'Leaders urge withdrawal of the military.'	<i>Free Press Journal</i> 59
24.	25.2.46	All RIAF: Bombay Units Out in Sympathy with RIN Strikers	News report, 'All RIAF units in Bombay area on strike.'	<i>Free Press Journal</i> 59
25	25.2.46	Many Ratings Critical of Central Strike Committee for Reaching Agreement	News report, 'No decision as yet.'	<i>Free Press Journal</i> 60
26.	25.2.46	Aruna Asaf Ali Regrets M.K. Gandhi's Statement	News report, 'Peace can come only when military retire.'	<i>Free Press Journal</i> 60
27	26.2.46	M.K. Gandhi Rebuts Aruna Asaf Ali	Extracts from M.K. Gandhi's 'Statement to the Press',	<i>Harijan</i> , 3 March 1946, and reprinted in his <i>Collected Works</i> , Vol. LXXXIII, New Delhi, 1981, pp. 183-4
28.	26.2.46	S.A. Dange Alleges Systematic Cover-up by Government	News report, 'It was undeclared martial law.'	<i>Free Press Journal</i> 61
29.	26.2.46	Maulana Azad Advises Caution and Restraint to Strikers	Extracts from a news report, 'Bombay rising ill-advised, says Azad.'	<i>Statesman</i> 63

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Pg No.</i>
30.	27.2.46	M.R. Jayakar Surprised at Congress Admonishing Naval Ratings	Extracts from a letter by M.R. Jayakar to T.B. Sapru, Bombay	File No. 807, M.R. Jayakar Papers (1946), NAI 63
31.	3.3.46	T.B. Sapru Worried About Communists Fomenting RIN Troubles	Extracts from a letter by T.B. Sapru to M.R. Jayakar, Allahabad,	File No. 807, M.R. Jayakar Papers (1946), NAI 64
32.	3.3.46	Last Message of the Naval Central Strike Committee	Press release, 'To the leaders and the people.'	<i>People's Age</i> 64
33.	3.3.46	Communist Party Denounces Congress for Settlement of RIN Mutiny	Editorial, 'In the name of our dead.'	<i>People's Age</i> 65
34.	3.3.46	Bombay's Three Days of Bloody Battle	Extracts from an article, 'People's solidarity with RIN brothers.'	<i>People's Age</i> 67
35.	6.3.46	Lessons from the Riots	Extracts from an article, 'Lessons from the Bombay Riots', by Bharatan Kumarappa.	<i>Free Press Journal</i> 68
36.	25.3.46	Bombay Presidency Women's Council's Views Regarding RIN Disturbances	Letter from the President, Bombay Presidency Women's Council, to the Secretary, Home Department, Government of India, Bombay	File No. 5/21/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 69
37.	28.3.46	Mahila Sangh, Parel (Bombay), Condemns Firing	The Hon. General Secretary of the Mahila Sangh, Parel, circulated copies of a resolution passed by the Sangh on 28 March 1946, upon the untimely death of Mrs. Kamal Donde, a founding member of the Sangh, who had fallen victim to military firing on 22 February 1946.	File No. 385, All India Women's Conference Papers (1946) NMML. 71

(b) Disturbances in Bombay: Official Perspectives

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Pg No.</i>
1.	19.2.46	Hunger Strike by 1000 Ratings	Telephone message at 1445 hours, 19 February 1946, from the Military Intelligence Officer, Bombay to Military Intelligence Directorate,	File No. 5/21/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 71

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<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Pg No.</i>
			G.S. Branch. Copy of transcript forwarded to Intelligence Bureau, Home Department, GOI.	
2	19.2.46	Bands of Ratings Roam the Streets of Bombay	Report by the Deputy Director, Intelligence Bureau, to the Director, Intelligence Bureau, Home Department, GOI	File No. 5/21/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 72
3.	19.2.46	Aruna Asaf Ali and Purshottam Das Address Mass Meeting of RIN Ratings	Telephone message at 2130 hours, 19 February 1946, from the Military Intelligence Officer, Bombay to Military Intelligence Directorate, G.S. Branch. Copy of the transcript forwarded to Intelligence Bureau, Home Department, GOI.	File No. 5/21/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 72
4.	21.2.46	Firing on Ratings Confined to Castle Barracks	Director of Intelligence, H.Q. India Command. Extracts from Situation Report No. 1	File No. 5/21/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 73
5.	21.2.46	Ratings Exchange Fire and Seize Ships	Secraphone message received by Intelligence Bureau, Home Department, Government of India, from the Chief Intelligence Officer, Bombay at 3.30 p.m.	File No. 5/21/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 74
6.	21.2.46	Flag Officer Threatens Mutineers with Overwhelming Force	Director of Intelligence, HQ India Command: Situation Report No. 2	File No. 5/21/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 75
7.	22.2.46	Congress Disowns Any Participation in Mutiny	Extracts from telegram by the Governor of Bombay, to the Viceroy	File No. 5/21/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 77
8	22.2.46	Communist Party Support for Mutineers	Director of Intelligence, H.Q. India Command: Extracts from Daily Security Summary No. 88 (up to 1700 hrs. 21 February 1946)	File No. 5/21/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 77
9.	22.2.46	Army and Air Force Deployed Against RIN Mutineers	Director of Intelligence, H.Q. India Command: Situation Report No. 3	File No. 5/21/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 79
10.	22.2.46	Strike Leaders Urge their Men to Hold out	Director of Intelligence, H.Q. India Command: Situation Report No. 4	File No. 5/21/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 80

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Pg No</i>
11.	22.2.46	Communist Campaign for Complete Hartal in Bombay	Secraphone message received by Intelligence Bureau, Home Department, GOI, from the Chief Intelligence Officer, Bombay at 3.40 p.m.	File No. 5/21/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 82
12.	23.2.46	Bombay Under Curfew	Secraphone message received by Intelligence Bureau, Home Department, GOI, from the Chief Intelligence Officer, Bombay at 9:30 a.m.	File No. 5/21/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 83
13.	23.2.46	Congress and Muslim League Peace Brigades	Telephone message received by Intelligence Bureau, Home Department, GOI, from "Mr. Simms" [E.A. Simms of War Department?] at 12:45 hours	File No. 5/21/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 83
14.	23.2.46	Mutinous Ships and Establishments Surrender	Director of Intelligence, H.Q. India Command: Situation Report No. 6	File No. 5/21/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 84
15.	23.2.46	RIN Surrender Implemented	Telegram by the Secretary to the Governor of Bombay, to the P S V	File No. 5/21/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 85
16.	23.2.46	Army Takes Over RIN Ships and Establishments	Director of Intelligence, H.Q. India Command: Situation Report No. 7	File No. 5/21/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 85
17.	24.2.46	Ratings Begin Routine Duties	Director of Intelligence, H.Q. India Command: Situation Report No. 8	File No. 5/21/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 86
18.	24.2.46	Localised Trouble Continues in Labour Neighbourhood	Secraphone message received by Intelligence Bureau, Home Department, GOI, from the Chief Intelligence Officer, Bombay at 11 a.m.	File No. 5/21/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 87
19.	24.2.46	Incidents of Arson in North Bombay	Telegram from Special Branch, Bombay, to Intelligence Bureau, Home Department, GOI	File No. 5/21/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 88
20.	25.2.46	Muslim League Warns of Disaster in Bombay	Secraphone message received by Intelligence Bureau, Home Department, GOI, from the Chief Intelligence Officer, Bombay at 11 a.m.	File No. 5/21/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 89

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<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Pg No.</i>
21.	25.2.46	Situation Under Control in Bombay	Director of Intelligence, H.Q. India Command: Daily Security Summary No. 90 (up to 0900 hours 25 February 1946)	89
22	25.2.46	Bombay Casualties: 228 Dead and 1046 Wounded	Telegram by Special Branch, Bombay, to Intelligence Bureau, Home Department, GOI	90

(c) Disturbances in Karachi

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Pg No.</i>
1.	22.2.46	Bombay RIN Unrest Spreads to Karachi	News report, 'RIN ratings in pitched battle with British.'	90
2.	22.2.46	RIN Ratings Open Fire from HMIS Hindustan	News report, 'Hindustan opens fire on Karachi.'	91
3.	22.2.46	Military Police Open Fire on HMIS Hindustan	Extracts from a news report, 'Military police fire at Karachi strikers.'	92
4	23.2.46	End of Karachi RIN Uprising	Extract from a news report 'Ratings give up after 25 minute battle.'	92
5.	-	Diary of Karachi RIN Events	A day-to-day account by the Superintendent of Police, Sind CID. An updated copy is on file.	92

(d) Disturbances in Calcutta

<i>S.No</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Pg No.</i>
1	25.2.46	Situation in Calcutta Made Worse by Bombay and Karachi RIN Unrest	Telegram from the Governor of Bengal to the Viceroy	96
2	3.3.46	Calcutta RIN, RIAF Come Out in Sympathy Against Bombay Firing	Extracts from an article, 'Protest against Bombay firing and India-wide repression.'	97
3.	3.3.46	Calcutta Students, Workers Stage Huge Rally	Extracts from a news report, 'One lakh workers' protest strike against Bombay atrocities.'	97

(e) Disturbances in South India

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Pg No.</i>
1.	22.2.46	RIN Deckhands Stop Work in Port Blair, Andaman Islands	Telegraphic report received by Intelligence Bureau, Home Department, GOI, from Port Blair, Andaman Islands, (The document does not specify the sender of the telegram.)	File No. 5/18/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI. 99
2.	26.2.46	General Strike in Madras	Extracts from a news report, 'General strike in Madras.'	<i>Free Press Journal</i> 99
3.	28.2.46	Lathi Charge and Firing in Madras	Express letter from the Chief Secretary, Public (General) Department, Government of Madras, to Intelligence Bureau, Home Department, GOI, Madras	File No. 5/5/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 100
4.	1.3.46	Riots in Conjeevaram, Tamil Nadu, in Support for RIN Mutineers	Copy of a letter from the Stationary Sub Magistrate, Conjeevaram, to the District Magistrate, Chingleput, Saidapet, and forwarded by the latter to the Chief Secretary, Government of Madras	File No. 1867, Public (General), Government of Madras, TNSA 101
5.	2.3.46	Police Fire on Conjeevaram Rioters	Extracts from a copy of a report by the Deputy Superintendent of Police, Chingleput, to the District Magistrate, Saidapet, and forwarded to the Chief Secretary, Government of Madras	File No. 1867, Public (General), Government of Madras, TNSA 103
6.	3.3.46	Madras Hartal in Protest Against Bombay Firing	Extracts from a report, 'Madras workers', citizens' protest strikes, hartal'.	<i>People's Age</i> 104
7.	5.3.46	Four Killed in the Conjeevaram Firing	Express letter by Chief Secretary, Public (General), Government of Madras, to Intelligence Bureau, Home Department, GOI, Madras	File No. 5/5/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 104
8.	~.2.46	Shooting Incident Involving Justice Byers	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Madras Province for the Second half of February 1946	Fortnightly Reports, Public (General), Government of Madras, TNSA 105
9.	19.3.46	Cheyyar, Tamil Nadu, Crowd Burns Down Rice Depot	Express letter from the Chief Secretary, Public (General), Government of Madras, to Intelligence	File No. 5/5/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 107

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Pg No.</i>
			Bureau, Home Department, GOI, Madras	
10	3.10.46	Congress, Communists Differ over Conjeevaram and Cheyyar Unrest	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Madras Province for the first half of March 1946.	File No. 18/3/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 108
11	8.4.46	Madras to Shift Justice Byers' Trial to Calcutta	Extracts from letter by K. Ramunni Menon, Chief Secretary, Public (General), Government of Madras, to the Secretary, Department, GOI, Madras	File No. 5/5/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 109
12	10.6.46	Madras Government Urged to Withdraw Prosecutions in Connection with Riot	Memorandum submitted by R.Subbier, Congress M.L.A. (Chingleput), and E. Venugopal Reddy, President, Chingleput District Congress Committee, to the Government of Madras	File No. 1867, Public (General), Government of Madras TNSA 109
13	23.2.46	Ratings of HMIS Circars in Vishakhapatnam on Strike	News report, 'Vizag RIN men declare strike.'	<i>Free Press Journal</i> 110
14	3.3.46	Communist Support for Vishakhapatnam RIN Strikers	Extracts from a news report, 'Naval ratings strike.'	<i>People's Age</i> 110
15	3.3.46	South Indian Railway Workers Down Tools and March on Tiruchirappally	Extracts from a news report, 'One lac workers' strike and rally'.	<i>People's Age</i> 111

(f) Aftermath: Official Sources

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Pg No.</i>
1.	1.6.46	Viceroy Seeks Home Department's Views Regarding Court-martial of RIN Mutineers	Letter by G.E.B. Abell, Private Secretary, Viceroy, to A.E. Porter, Secretary, Home Department, GOI, New Delhi	File No. 21/8/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 111
2.	6.6.46	Home Department: Courts-martial of Mutineers Impolitic	Extracts from copy of a letter by A.E. Porter, Secretary, Home Department, GOI, to G.E.B. Abell, Private Secretary, Viceroy, New Delhi	File No. 21/8/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 112

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Pg No.</i>
3.	7.6.46	Home Department Considers Court-martial of Commander King Inadvisable	Extracts from copy of a letter by A.E. Porter, Secretary, Home Department, GOI, to G.E.B. Abell, Private Secretary, Viceroy, New Delhi	File No. 21/8/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 114
4.	30.6.46	Wavell and Auchinleck for Proceeding without Delay with RIN Courts-martial	Telegram from the Secretary, War Department, GOI, forwarding a message by C.J.E. Auchinleck, Commander in Chief in India, to John Colville and Francis Mudie, Governors, Bombay and Sind respectively	File No. 21/8/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 115
5.	1.7.46	Bombay Government Thinks Trials of Mutineers Inopportune	Extracts from a telegram by the Chief Secretary, Government of Bombay, to PSV	File No. 21/8/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 116
6.	3.7.46	Auchinleck for Summary Proceedings, Except in the Case of Commander King	Letter by A.D.F. Dundas, Secretary, War Department, GOI, forwarding a message from C.J.E. Auchinleck, Commander in Chief in India, to G.E.B. Abell, Private Secretary, Viceroy	File No. 21/8/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 116
7.	5.7.46	War Department Agrees with Auchinleck	Note by A.D.F. Dundas, Secretary, War Department, to A.E. Porter, Secretary, Home Department, GOI	File No. 21/8/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 117
8.	23.7.46	Commander King to Appeal Against Sentence	Jotting on file by A.D.F. Dundas, Secretary, War Department, GOI	File No. 21/8/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 117

(g) Aftermath: Newspaper Sources

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Pg No.</i>
1.	14.3.46	RIN Ratings in Custody on Hunger Strike	Extracts from a news report, 'Over 300 RIN ratings on hunger strike in Mulund Camp.'	<i>Free Press Journal</i> 118
2.	15.3.46	Mulund Camp (Bombay) Strike Spreads	Extracts from a news report, 'More military guards at Mulund Camp.'	<i>Free Press Journal</i> 118
3.	24.3.46	Hunger Strike of Arrested Ratings	Report, 'RIN ratings' leaders on hunger strike.'	<i>People's Age</i> 119

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Pg No.</i>
4.	7.4.46	Jubbulpore Indian Signals Corps' Strike	Extracts of a letter by a soldier of the Indian Signal Corps at Jabalpur, to his brother, published in the <i>People's Age</i> under the heading, 'Indian Army too wants national government.'	<i>People's Age</i> 120
5	14.4.46	Unemployment Among Demobilised Soldiers	A letter to the editor by a demobilised soldier, who signed himself as 'A soldier returned from the war' was published in <i>People's Age</i> under the heading, 'What must 20 lacs of us do to live?'	<i>People's Age</i> 122
6.	17.4.46	Jabalpur Army Strikers Face Court-martial	Extracts from a news report, 'Echo of Jubbulpore army strike.'	<i>Free Press Journal</i> 123
7.	12.5.46	Dismissed RIN Ratings Write to Vallabhbhai Patel	Extracts from a report, 'Victimised RIN ratings write to Sardar Patel.'	<i>People's Age</i> 123
8	9.6.46	Indian Soldiers Send a Memorandum to Cabinet Mission	Extracts from a report, 'Quit forthwith.'	<i>People's Age</i> 124
9.	14.7.46	Eastern Command's Security Intelligence Summary Leaked to the Press	Extracts from a featured column, 'A patriot's notebook '	<i>People's Age</i> 125
10.	22.9.46	2000 Indian Armen on Strike in Kohat, North West Frontier Province	Report, 'Behind army's iron curtain.'	<i>People's Age</i> 126
11	7.11.46	Jayaprakash Narayan Invited to Head RIN Strike Committee	Extracts from a letter by H.C. Bihari, member, Naval Central Strike Committee, to Jayaprakash Narayan, Burdwan,	File No. 120, Jayaprakash Narayan Papers, NMML 127
12	27.10.46	Communists Unhappy with Suppression of Findings of RIN Enquiry Commission	Editorial, 'Justice for RIN heroes.'	<i>People's Age</i> 127

1.vii Nature of Political Unrest (November '45 to February '46)

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Pg No.</i>
1.	29.3.46	Causes of Political Unrest in Bengal (November '45–February '46)	Extracts from a letter by the Secretary, Home Department, Government of Bengal, to the Secretary, Home Department, GOI, Calcutta	File No. 5/8/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 128
2.	7.3.46	Causes of Political Unrest in the CP and Berar (November 45–February 46)	Extracts from letter by A.H. Layard, Secretary, Political and Military Department, Government of CP and Berar, to A.E. Porter, Secretary, Home Department, GOI, Nagpur	File No. 5/8/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 131
3.	1.3.46 3.3.46	Summary of Cause of Political Unrest, Province by Province (November '45–February '46)	Extracts from notes by F.G. Cracknell, Director, Intelligence Bureau, Home Department, GOI, and J.A. Thorne, Home Member	File No. 5/8/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 132

1.viii Delhi Victory Day Celebrations

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Pg No.</i>
1.	7.3.46	Responses of Political Groups to Victory Day Celebrations in Delhi	Note prepared by Deputy Superintendent of Police, CID, Delhi	File No. 6/13/46, Special Branch, Chief Commissioner's Office, Delhi, Department of Delhi Archives. 133
2.	8.3.46	Disturbances in Delhi on Victory Day	Extracts from a note prepared by W. Christie, Chief Commissioner, Delhi	File No. 6/13/46, Special Branch, Chief Commissioner's Office, Delhi, Department of Delhi Archives. 134
3.	8.3.46	M. Asaf Ali Condemns Victory Day Clashes	Extracts from a news report, 'Mr. Asaf Ali's appeal.'	<i>Statesman</i> 136
4.	8.3.46	Crowds Jeer Victory Parade	News report, 'New Delhi also protests.'	<i>Hindustan Times</i> 136
5.	8.3.46	Delhi a Bomb-shattered Sight After Victory Day Demonstrations	Extracts from a news report, 'Repeated shootings and tear gas attacks.'	<i>Hindustan Times</i> 137

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<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Pg No.</i>
6.	8.3.46	Government Asked to Explain Firing on Victory Day	J.A. Thorne, Home Member, answers questions during Legislative Assembly adjournment motion	File No. 5/2/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 138
7.	9.3.46	Incidents During Delhi Victory Day Parade	Extracts from report of Captain Wyllie Carrick, Officer in charge, Regimental Colour Parties, to War Department, GOI, Red Fort, Delhi	File No. 6/13/46, Special Branch, Chief Commissioner's Office, Delhi, Department of Delhi Archives 139
8.	13.3.46	Disturbances in Delhi During Victory Day Celebrations	Note prepared by Intelligence Bureau, Home Department, GOI	File No. 5/2/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 140
9.	31.3.46	Communists Party Analyses Victory Day Unrest	Extracts from a news report, 'City's hartal, workers' strike.'	<i>People's Age</i> 141

I.ix Protests Against Ration Cuts

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Pg No.</i>
1.	24.2.46	Hunger March Against Ration Cuts in Allahabad	Extracts from a news report, 'All parties' joint protests against ration cut.'	<i>People's Age</i> 143
2.	24.2.46	Congress Opposes Strike Against Ration Cuts in Kanpur	Extracts from a report, 'Cawnpore workers lead battle.'	<i>People's Age</i> 144

I.x Delhi Police and Nationalist Muslims

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Pg No.</i>
1.	10.5.46	Police Disperse Meeting of Nationalist Muslims in Ballimaran, Delhi	Extracts from a news report, 'Curfew imposed in several areas of city.'	<i>Hindustan Times</i> 145
2.	21.5.46	M. Asaf Ali Demands Enquiry into Dispersal of Nationalist Muslim Meeting in Ballimaran	Extracts from letter by W. Christie, Chief Commissioner, to F.H. Teal, Deputy Commissioner, Delhi	File No. 1(27)/1946, Home Branch, Chief Commissioner's Office, Delhi, Department of Delhi Archives. 145
3.	-	Authorities' Version of Events of Ballimaran	Extracts from letter by F.H. Teal, Deputy Commissioner, to W. Christie, Chief Commissioner, Delhi	File No. 1(27)/1946, Home Branch, Chief Commissioner's Office, Delhi (1946) Department of Delhi Archives 146

1.xi Student Protests

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>		<i>Pg No.</i>
1.	24.1.46	Protests in the United Provinces Against Repression of Student Activists	Extracts from a news report, 'Anti Repression Day in U.P.'	<i>Hindustan Times</i>	147
2.	10.3.46	Clashes Between Hindu and Muslim Students of Lahore	Extracts from a news report, 'Students fired on in Lahore.'	<i>Hindustan Times</i>	147
3.	9.3.46	Lahore Communist Party Accuses Congress of Communist-baiting	Letter to Mr. Bhimsen Sacher, Leader, Congress Assembly Party, Lahore, by Teja Singh Swatantra, Secretary, Punjab Provincial Committee, Communist Party of India, Lahore	File No. G-23(Pt.2), AICC Papers, (1946) NMML	148
4.	10.3.46	Lahore Communist Party Statement Regarding Clash Between Hindu-Muslim Students	Press statement by Teja Singh Swatantra, Secretary, Punjab Provincial Committee, Communist Party of India, Lahore	File No. G-23(Pt.2), AICC Papers, NMML	149
5.	10.8.46	Delhi Students' 9 August Demonstration	News report, 'Students' procession tear-gassed in Delhi.'	<i>Hindustan Times</i>	149

1.xii Political Prisoners

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>		<i>Pg No.</i>
1.	23.1.46	Questions in Legislative Assembly Regarding Political Prisoners and Their Release	Extracts from a debate in Central Legislative Assembly	File No. 22/5/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI	150
2.	1.3.46	Numbers Imprisoned Under Ordinance III	Table showing number of prisoners in detention	File No. 8/5/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI	153
3.	11.3.46	Political Detenus, and Their Release: Debate in Council of State	Extracts from debate in Council of State	File No. 8/5/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI	153
4.	28.2.46	Allegations of Torture in Lahore Fort Jail	Clipping titled 'Police atrocities in Lahore Fort' from <i>Hindustan Times</i> , 28 February 1946, is included in the file The clipping has attached comments made by the Home Department, in connection with the allegations.	File No. 22/45/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI	154

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<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Pg No.</i>
5.	23.3.46	Alleged Torture of Ram Manohar Lohia in Lahore Fort Jail	Extracts from a debate held in Legislative Assembly	File No. 22/1/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 155
6	26.5.46	Political Prisoners Release Campaign in Bengal	Extracts from an article, 'Bengal's forgotten warriors, Release campaign gets under way', by Nikhil Chakravarty.	<i>People's Age</i> 155
7	14.7.46	Popular Campaign for Release of Bengal Political Prisoners	Extracts from a news report, 'Province-wide campaign for release of Bengal's political prisoners', By Nikhil Chakravarty.	<i>People's Age</i> 158
8.	18.8.46	Hunger Strike Threat by Bengal Political Prisoners	Extracts from a report, 'Will Bengal's imprisoned heroes be forced to go on hunger strike?'	<i>People's Age</i> 159
9.	23.12.46	North West Frontier Province Ministry Allows Special Facilities for Political Prisoners	Extracts from a news report, 'Political prisoners' rights recognised in N.W.F.P.'.	<i>Hindustan Times</i> 160

2. Political Organizations

INTRODUCTION

2.1 General

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Pg No.</i>
1.		Assembly Elections Results 1946	Results of Assembly elections in 1946.	<i>Indian Annual Register (1946)</i> , Volume I, pp. 229-231 165
2.	19.6.46	Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh	An unsigned report prepared by the Intelligence Bureau, Home Department, GOI	File No. 5/12/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 167
3.	9.12.46	Volunteer Organisations and Private Armies	Extracts from a Home Department, GOI, report by E.J. Beveridge	File No. 28/5/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI. 170
4.	12.9.46	Volunteer Organisations in the CP and Berar	Report by the Assistant Inspector General of Police, Special Branch, to the Chief Secretary, Government of CP and Berar	File No. 14, Political and Military Department, Government of CP and Berar, MPSA 191

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Pg No.</i>
2.ii	-13- 19.12.46	Constituent Assembly Proceedings, December 1946	Extracts from the debates on the Aims and Objects Resolution	<i>Constituent Assembly of India Debates</i> , Vol. I, 9-23 December 1946 (New Delhi, 1947) 198
1.	13.12.46	Friday, the 13 December 1946		198
2.	16.12.46	Monday, the 16 December 1946		212
3.	17.12.46	Tuesday, the 17 December 1946		225
4.	18.12.46	Wednesday, the 18 December 1946		243
5.	19.12.46	Thursday, the 19 December 1946		250

2.iii Congress

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Pg No.</i>
1.	-	Congress Election Manifesto 1946		<i>Indian Annual Register (1946)</i> , Vol. I, pp. 225-228. 269
2.	16.1.46	Vallabhbhai Patel's Anti-League, Anti-Pakistan Speech at Ahmedabad	Extracts from a news report, 'Pakistan means civil war'.	<i>Hindustan Times</i> 274
3.	18.1.46	Congress Electioneering in the United Provinces	Extracts from Weekly Report No. 3	Weekly Reports, CID Records, Government of the United Provinces UPSC. 275
4.	24.1.46	Gandhian Constitution Plan	Extracts from a news report, 'Gandhian constitution for a free India.'	<i>Free Press Journal</i> 275
5.	-1.46	Party Politics and the Forthcoming Elections in Madras Province	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Madras Province for the first half of January 1946.	Fortnightly Reports, Public (General), Government of Madras, TNSA 276
6.	26.1.46	Govind Ballabh Pant's Election Speech at Muzaffarnagar, Uttar Pradesh	Extracts from a news report, 'Nawabs alone fear advent of Congress into power.'	<i>Hindustan Times</i> 277
7.	1.2.46	Criticism of Recruitment Still of British Officers to the Indian Civil Service and Indian Police Service	Extract from a news report 'Government again censured'	<i>Statesman</i> 278

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<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Pg No</i>
8.	1.2.46	M.K. Gandhi Addresses Madras Workers' Rally	Extracts from a news report, 'The real mazdoor raj.'	<i>Free Press Journal</i> 278
9.	5.2.46	Congress-Muslim League Negotiations Breakdown in Sind	Extracts from a news report, 'League overtures for Sind coalition fail.'	<i>Hindustan Times</i> 278
10.	8.2.46	Ahrar Campaign in Jalandhar Against Muslim League	News report, 'Ahrars condemn League tactics.'	<i>Hindustan Times</i> 278
11.	8.2.46	Demonstration Against Cut in Wheat Rations in the United Provinces	Extracts from Weekly Report No. 6	Weekly Report, CID Records, Government of the United Provinces, UPSA 279
12.	8.2.46	Punjab Ahrar Leaders on Election Tour of the United Provinces	Extracts from Weekly Report No. 6	Weekly Report, CID Records, Government of the United Provinces, UPSA 279
13.	17.2.46	Violence During Bihar Election Campaign	Extracts from a news report, 'Full story of assault on Pt. Karyanand Sharma', by Indradeep Sinha.	<i>People's Age</i> 279
14.	25.2.46	The Punjab in the Wake of Unionist Party Collapse in Elections	Article, 'Punjab elections.'	<i>Hindustan Times</i> 280
15.	26.2.46	The Punjab: A Confused Election	Extracts from an article, 'How Muslim League won in Punjab' by H.N. Brailsford	<i>Hindustan Times</i> 281
16.	7.3.46	Congress-Akahi Unionist Coalition to Form the Punjab Ministry	Extracts from a news report, 'Why talks with League failed.'	<i>Hindustan Times</i> 283
17.	7.3.46	League Rejects the Punjab Coalition Ministry	Extracts from a news report, 'League warning of grave consequences.'	<i>Hindustan Times</i> 283
18.	7.3.46	Muslim Students Demonstrate Against the Punjab Coalition	News report, 'Anti Khizr demonstrations.'	<i>Hindustan Times</i> 283
19.	7.3.46	League and Congress Jockey for Power in the Punjab	Extracts from an article, 'Punjab Ministry.'	<i>Hindustan Times</i> 283
20.	11.3.46	Nehru's Speech at Dhaka Condemning Violence	Extracts from a news report, 'Congress is real people's panchayat.'	<i>Free Press Journal</i> 284
21.	12-15.3.46	Congress Policy Statements	Proceedings of the Working Committee, Indian National Congress, Bombay	<i>Indian Annual Register (1946)</i> , Vol. I, pp. 122-4. 284

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>		<i>Pg No.</i>
22.	13.3.46	Nehru's Role in Impending Cabinet Mission Talks	Extracts from a letter by Jawaharlal Nehru to C. C. Rajagopalachari, Bombay	Access No. 1426, Roll No. 9, C. Rajagopalachari Papers, NAI	287
23.	24.3.46	Political Parties Clash in Kanpur Elections	Extracts from a news report, 'Congress leaders unleash communal riot.' by O.P. Sangal.	<i>People's Age</i>	288
24.	16.4.46	Delhi Nationalist Muslim Rally	Extracts from a news report, 'Over 100,000 attend grand rally in Delhi.'	<i>Hindustan Times</i>	289
25.	16.4.46	North-West Frontier Province Rejects Muslim League	News report, 'Pathans are against Pakistan.'	<i>Free Press Journal</i>	290
26.	-4.46	Dissent within Congress Despite Winning Elections in Madras Province	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Madras Province for the first half of April 1946.	Fortnightly Reports, Public (General), Government of Madras, TNSA	291
27.	23.4.46	Valabhbhai Patel on How Britain Should Transfer Power	Extracts from a news report, 'Congress will have no British award.'	<i>Hindustan Times</i>	291
28.	5.7.46	Congress Rhetoric at Local Meetings in the United Provinces	Extracts from Weekly Report No. 27	Weekly Reports, CID Records, Government of United Provinces, UPSA	292
29.	5.8.46	Congress Party Budget Estimates for 1946-47	Extracts from a copy of Jawaharlal Nehru's note	Access No. 1425, Roll No. 8, C. Rajagopalachari Papers, NAI	292
30.	6.8.46	Jawaharlal Nehru Reviews Congress Party Organisation	Extracts from a copy of Jawaharlal Nehru's note, dated Allahabad, 6 August 1946, to members of the Working Committee, Indian National Congress, for its meeting to be held Wardha on 8-13 August 1946.	Access No. 1425, Roll No. 8, C. Rajagopalachari Papers, NAI	293
31.	8-12.8.46	Congress Policy Statements	Extracts from proceedings of the Working Committee, Indian National Congress, Wardha, 8-13 August 1946.	<i>Indian Annual Register (1946)</i> , Vol. I, pp. 107-109	295
32.	3.9.46	M.K. Gandhi's Message to Interim Government	News report, 'Gandhiji's advice to new ministers.'	<i>Hindustan Times</i>	297

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33.	3.9.46	Delhi Muslims Celebrate Interim Government	Extracts from a news report, 'Muslims participate in celebrations.'	<i>Hindustan Times</i>	297
34.	3.9.46	Public Enthusiasm on Formation of Interim Government	Extracts from a news report, 'India's first popular administration.'	<i>Hindustan Times</i>	297
35.	17.9.46	Plight of Congress Muslims in Bengal	Letter from Ashrafuddin Ahmad Chowdhury, a Congressman of Calcutta to Jawaharlal Nehru, Calcutta, 17 September 1946.	File No. P-5, AICC Papers, NMML	298
36.	27.9.46	Congress Activities in the United Provinces	Extracts from Weekly Report No. 38	Weekly Reports, CID Records, Government of the United Provinces, UPSA	300
37.	11.10.46	Village Panchayats in the United Provinces Act as Parallel Courts	Extracts from Weekly Report No. 39	Weekly Reports, CID Records, Government of the United Provinces, UPSA	300
38.	19.10.46	Alleged Communist Violence Against Students' Congress in Pondicherry	Extracts from a letter by Dinkar Sakrikar, General Secretary, All India Students' Congress, to Mridula Sarabhai, General Secretary, Indian National Congress, Bombay	File No. 22, AICC Papers, NMML	300
39.	1.11.46	Congress Activities in the United Provinces	Extracts from Weekly Report No. 42	Weekly Reports, CID Records, Government of the United Provinces, UPSA	300
40.	22.11.46	Congress Demands Withdrawal of League from Interim Government	Extracts from a letter by the Congress Subjects Committee to AICC President	File No. G-39, AICC Papers, NMML	301
41.	23-24.11.46	Proceedings of Indian National Congress, 54th Session, Meerut, 23-24 November 1946	Report of Proceedings of Indian National Congress, 54th Session, Meerut	Indian Annual Register (1946), Vol. I, pp. 282-96	301
42.	29.11.46	Congress Activities in the United Provinces	Extracts from Weekly Report No. 46	Weekly Report, CID Records, Government of the United Provinces, UPSA	319

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Pg No.</i>
43.	2.12.46	Dissension in Bengal Congress	Extracts from a letter by Jogesh Chandra Chakraborty, President, Mymensingh District Congress Committee, Bengal, to the General Secretary, AICC, Allahabad, Mymensingh	File No. G-31, AICC Papers, NMML 319

iv Socialists and Other Left Groups within Congress

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Pg No.</i>
1.	3.3.46	Congress Socialist Party for Revolutionary Path to Freedom	Extracts from a note from D.P. Joshi of Congress Socialist Party, to Jayaprakash Narayan, No name of place where the note was drafted is mentioned.	File No. 38, Jayaprakash Narayan Papers, NMML 321
2.	5.3.46	Aruna Asaf Ali for Boycott of British Goods	Extracts from a news report, 'Revolutionary India won't buy British.'	<i>Bombay Chronicle</i> 321
3.	8.3.46	Congress Socialists Attitude Towards Cabinet Mission	Extracts from an article, 'Declare freedom here and now', by Ashok Mehta.	<i>Free Press Journal</i> 321
4.	11.3.46	Forward Bloc Strategy in the Freedom Struggle	Extracts from an open letter by R.S. Ruikar, President, Forward Bloc, to Maulana, A.K. Azad, President, Indian National Congress, published in the press on 11 March 1946.	<i>Free Press Journal</i> 323
5.	9.4.46	Congress Socialist Party Policy	News report, 'Congress cannot ignore new forces in it.'	<i>Free Press Journal</i> 325
6.	16.4.46	Jayaprakash Narayan in a Press Interview	Extracts from a news report, 'Another struggle, if negotiations fail, says J.P. Narain.'	<i>Hindustan Times</i> 327
7.	27.5.46	Nana Patil Addresses a Congress Socialist Party Rally in Bombay	Extracts from a news report, 'British must quit or we'll kick them out.'	<i>Free Press Journal</i> 328
8.	28.5.46	British Labour Party Invites Contact with Congress Socialist Party	Extracts from copy of a letter by Jayaprakash Narayan to A.E. Porter, Secretary, Home Department, GOI	File No. 7, Jayaprakash Narayan Papers, NMML 329

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9.	7.6.46	Congress Socialist Party Activities in the United Provinces	Extracts from Weekly Report No. 23	Weekly Reports, CID Records, Government of the United Provinces, UPSA	329
10	5.7.46	Forward Bloc Activities in the United Provinces	Extracts from Weekly Report No. 27	Weekly Reports, CID Records, Government of the United Provinces, UPSA	329
11.	23.7.46	Jayaprakash Narayan Advocates Another Round of Struggle	Extracts from a news report, 'Jai Prakash Narain's call for new struggle.'	<i>Hindustan Times</i>	329
12.	27.9.46	Forward Bloc Opposes Congress Acceptance of Office	Extracts from Weekly Report No. 38	Weekly Reports, CID Records, Government of the United Provinces, UPSA	330
13.	27.9.46	Forward Bloc: Subhas Bose Still Alive	Extracts from Weekly Report No. 38	Weekly Reports, CID Records, Government of the United Provinces, UPSA	331
14.	10.10.46	Jayaprakash Narayan Invited to Bangalore to Bolster Local Congress Socialist Party	Extracts from a letter by S. Iswar, Secretary, Congress Socialist Party, Bangalore, to Jayaprakash Narayan, Bangalore	File No. 27, Jayaprakash Narayan Papers, NMML	331
15.	16.10.46	Draft Constitution for All India Congress Socialist Party Presented by Punjab Congress Socialist Party	Extracts from a letter with enclosure from 'Prem' of the Congress Socialist Party, Punjab, to Jayaprakash Narayan, Lahore	File No. 4 & 5, Jayaprakash Narayan Papers, NMML	332
16.	18.10.46	Jayaprakash Narayan Advocates Direct Action	Extracts from Weekly Report No. 40	Weekly Reports, CID Records, Government of the United Provinces, UPSA	333
17.	25.10.46	Azad Hind Government Day Celebrated by the Forward Bloc	Extracts from Weekly Report No. 41	Weekly Reports, CID Records, Govt. of the United Provinces, UPSA	333
18.	26.10.46	Congress Socialists set up Branches of Hindustan Red Army in CP and Berar	Extracts from a Special Branch report	File No. 16-A/1947, Political and Military Department, Government of CP and Berar, MPSA	333

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>		<i>Pg No.</i>
19.	1.11.46	Jayaprakash Narayan's Tour of the United Provinces	Extracts from Weekly Report No. 42	Weekly Reports, CID Records, Government of the United Provinces, UPSA	334
20.	8.11.46	Swami Sahajanand on Congress' Agrarian Policy	Copy of a note by Swami Sahajanand, M.L.A., Bihar, (addressed to Jayaprakash Narayan?), Bihar	File No. 117, Jayaprakash Narayan Papers, NMML	334
21.	8.11.46	Jayaprakash Narayan Criticises Congress for Entering Interim Government	Extracts from Weekly Report No. 43	Weekly Reports, CID Records, Government of the United Provinces, UPSA	335
22.	8.11.46	Congress Socialist Party Activities in the United Provinces	Extracts from Weekly Report No. 43	Weekly Reports, CID Records, Government of the United Provinces, UPSA	335
23.	14.11.46	Berar Provincial Congress Committee Opposes Congress Ministry's Hostility Towards Nana Patil	Report by the Sub-inspector of Police, Amraoti, to the District Superintendent of Police, Amraoti	File No. 9, Political and Military Department, Government of CP and Berar, MPSA	335
24.	15.11.46	CP and Berar Congress Ministry Critical of Nana Patil's Politics	Extracts from a letter by the Sub-inspector of Police, Akola, to the District Superintendent of Police, Akola	File No. 16-31/1947, Political and Military Department, Government of CP and Berar, MPSA	337
25.	17.11.46	Nana Patil Banned from Speaking at Public Meetings in the CP and Berar	Report submitted to the Deputy Commissioner, Akola, by A. Rahim, A.N.T., Basim, Basim	File No. 9, Political and Military Department, Government of CP and Berar, MPSA	339
26.	19.11.46	Vidharba Congress Committee Organizes Nana Patil's Tour	Extracts from a letter by M.R. Joshi, Deputy Commissioner, Buldana District to C.J.W. Lillie, Commissioner, Berar, Buldana	File No. 9, Political and Military Department, Government of CP and Berar, MPSA	341
27.	23.11.46	Ban on Nana Patil's Speeches does not Dampen his Popularity	Extract from a report by M.G. Wynne, District Superintendent of Police, Amraoti, to G.L. Watson, Deputy Commissioner, Amraoti	File No. 9, Political and Military Department, Government of CP and Berar, MPSA	342

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<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>		<i>Pg No.</i>
28.	23.11.46	Congress Socialist Party Activities in the CP and Berar	Extracts from a Special Branch Report	File No. 16-A/1947, Political and Military Department, Government of CP and Berar, MPSA	342
29.	29.11.46	Revolutionary Socialist Party Activities in the United Provinces	Extracts from Weekly Report No. 46	Weekly Reports, CID Records, Government of the United Provinces, UPSA	342
30.	6.12.46	Forward Bloc Activities in the United Provinces	Extracts from Weekly Report No. 47	Weekly Reports, CID Records, Government of the United Provinces, UPSA	343
31.	13.12.46	Revolutionary Socialist Party Activities in the United Provinces	Extracts from Weekly Report No. 48	Weekly Reports, CID Records, Government of the United Provinces, UPSA	343
32.	27.12.46	Revolutionary Socialist Party Activities in the United Provinces	Extracts from Weekly Report No. 49	Weekly Reports, CID Records, Government of the United Provinces, UPSA	343
33.	27.12.46	Jayaprakash Narayan's Tour of the United Provinces	Extracts from Weekly Report No. 49	Weekly Reports, CID Records, Govt. of the United Provinces, UPSA	343
34.	28.12.46	Maganlal Bagdi Thinks Constituent Assembly will Sink Indian Nationalism	Extracts from a Special Branch Report	File No. 16-A/1947, Political and Military Department, Government of CP and Berar, MPSA	344

2.v Communist [Party of India]

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>		<i>Pg No</i>
1.	6.1.46	Ruffians Manhandle Women Workers of Mahila Atma Raksha Samity	Extracts from a featured column, 'A patriot's notebook.' by N.K. Krishnan	<i>People's Age</i>	344
2.	6.1.46	Protests Against Curbs on Dissemination of News of 1942 Repressions	Extracts from an editorial, 'Attack on the press.'	<i>People's Age</i>	346
3.	6.1.46	Communist Party's Electioneering Stance	Extracts from a news report, 'Congress-League unity essential.'	<i>Statesman</i>	346

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Pg No.</i>
4.	24.1.46	Communist Party's Bombay Offices Attacked	Report, 'Communist press set fire to.'	<i>Free Press Journal</i> 347
5.	25.1.46	Mahatma Gandhi Condemns Attack on Communist Party Offices	News report, 'Bombay outrage on communist headquarters.'	<i>Free Press Journal</i> 347
6.	31.1.46	M.N. Roy on the Rise of Fascism in India	Extracts from a letter to the editor by M.N. Roy	<i>Statesman</i> 347
7.	13.4.46	Police Incriminate Communist Workers in the Dadhipedhi (CP and Berar) Dacoity Case	Extracts from a memorandum by the District Superintendent of Police, Amraoti, to the Deputy Inspector General of Police, Western Range, Nagpur, Amraoti	File No. 14, Political and Military Department, Government of CP and Berar. MPSA 348
8.	10.5.46	Communist Arrested in the Dadhipedhi Dacoity Case Accuse Police of Brutality	Letter by B.K. Diwanji, President, Badnera Municipal Committee, to Ravi Shanker Shukla, PM, CP and Berar, Badnera	File No. 14, Political and Military Department, Government of CP and Berar, MPSA 350
9.	19.5.46	Police Release Communists Arranged in Connection with Dadhipedhi Dacoity	Letter by B.N. Mukherjee, Secretary, CP and Berar Provincial Communist Party, to the Home Minister, Government of CP and Berar, Nagpur	File No. 9-174/1947, Political and Military Department, Government of CP and Berar, MPSA 351
10.	23.6.46	Police Rebut Communist Party Allegations in the Dadhipedhi Case	Extracts from a memorandum by the District Superintendent of Police, Amraoti, to the Deputy Inspector General of Police, Western Range, Nagpur, Amraoti	File No. 9-174/1947, Political and Military Department, Government of CP and Berar, MPSA 353
11.	5.7.46	Communist Party Activities in the United Provinces	Extracts from Weekly Report No. 27	Weekly Reports, CID Records, Government of the United Provinces, UPSC 357
12.	26.7.46	Communist Party Activities in the United Provinces	Extracts from Weekly Report No. 29	Weekly Reports, CID Records, Government of the United Provinces, UPSC 357
13.	18.8.46	Communist Party Policy Statement	Editorial, 'Communist Policy for the final phase of India's freedom struggle.'	<i>People's Age</i> 357

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14.	8.9.46	Communists Criticise Repression of Strikes and Popular Unrest	Editorial, 'Repression under Congress ministries.'	<i>People's Age</i> 373
15.	13.9.46	Communists Shore up Election Prospects in CP and Berar	Extracts from a note prepared by the Political and Military Department, Government of CP and Berar	File No. 72, Political and Military Department, Government of CP and Berar, MPSA 375
16.	17.9.46	Police Raid on Communist Party Offices in Calcutta	News report, 'Police swoop on Calcutta Communist office.'	<i>Free Press Journal</i> 376
17.	20.9.46	Communists Use Aggressive Tactics in the United Provinces	Extracts from Weekly Report No. 37	Weekly Reports, CID Records, Government of the United Provinces, UPSCA. 377
18.	28.9.46	Disruption in the CP and Berar	Extracts from Police Abstract of Intelligence, Vol. LXI, No. 39, Nagpur	File No. 72/146, Political and Military Department, Government of CP and Berar, MPSA 377
19.	18.10.46	Madras Government Measures to Check Communist Influence	News report, 'Security demanded from Janashakti press.'	<i>Free Press Journal</i> 378
20.	16.11.46	Communists to be Rounded up in the CP and Berar	Telegram by the under Secretary, Political and Military Department, to all Deputy Commissioners, Commissioners, and the Inspector General of Police, CP and Berar, Nagpur	File No. 3 A/1947, Political and Military Department, Government of CP and Berar, MPSA 378
21.	17.11.46	Justification for Rounding up Active Communists in the CP and Berar	Memorandum by the District Magistrate, Wardha, to the Chief Secretary, Government of CP and Berar	File No. 3-A/1947, Political and Military Department, Government of CP and Berar, MPSA 379
22.	17.11.46	Dossiers on Prominent Communists Active in CP and Berar	Extracts from notes prepared for the District Superintendent of Police, Nagpur, by Sub-Inspector L.M. Joshi, Nagpur	File No. 3 A/1947, Political and Military Department, Government of CP and Berar, MPSA 379
23.	13.12.46	Communist Activities in the United Provinces	Extracts from Weekly Report No. 48	Weekly Reports, CID Records, Government of the United Provinces, UPSCA 381

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24.	27.12.46	Indian People's Theatre at Christchurch College, Kanpur	Extracts from Weekly Report No. 49	Weekly Reports, CID Records, Government of the United Provinces, UP SA	381

2.vi The Mahasabha and Hindu Communalism

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>		<i>Pg No.</i>
1.	7.3.46	M.R. Jayakar: Hindu Mahasabha Ought to Merge with Congress	Extracts from copy of a letter by M.R. Jayakar to Jagdish Prasad	File No. 741, M.R. Jayakar Papers, NAI	381
2.	7.4.46	Resolutions Passed by the Hindu Conference at Bhalwal, Punjab	Extracts from a letter with enclosure, sent to the AIHMS by the Secretary, Arya Samaj, Bhalwal, Punjab, Bhalwal,	File No. C-90, AIHMS Papers, NMML	382
3.	21.4.46	Rising Communal Tensions in Delhi and Aligarh	Extracts from a letter by Asutosh Lahiri, General Secretary, to Shyama Prasad Mukherji, President, AIHMS, New Delhi	File No. C-140, AIHMS Papers, NMML	383
4.	24.4.46	AIHMS Memorandum to Cabinet Mission	Extracts from a report of the Working Committee, AIHMS, New Delhi	File No. C-111, AIHMS Papers, NMML	384
5.	24.4.46	Hindu Mahasabha on the Impact of Communal Riots	Copy of a letter by Asutosh Lahiri, General Secretary to Shyama Prasad Mukherji, President, AIHMS, New Delhi	File No. C-140, AIHMS Papers, NMML	385
6.	14.5.46	Delhi Hindu Mahasabha in Need of Funds	Extracts from a letter by Asutosh Lahiri, General Secretary to Shyama Prasad Mukherji, President, AIHMS, New Delhi	File No. C-140, AIHMS Papers, NMML	386
7.	20.5.46	Hindu Mahasabha Plans for Getting into the Constituent Assembly	Extracts from a letter by Asutosh Lahiri, General Secretary, to Shyama Prasad Mukherji, President, AIHMS, New Delhi	File No. C-140, AIHMS Papers, NMML	386
8.	19.8.46 20.8.46	Hindu Mahasabha Rejects the Non-violent Path to Freedom	Presidential address delivered by B.S. Moonje, Acting President, AIHMS, at the All India Hindu Mahajati Sammelan held at Kurukshetra (Haryana)	File No. C-105, AIHMS Papers, NMML	387

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9.	20.9.46	A Letter Written Allegedly by an Ex-Muslim Leaguer	Letter from M.S. Rao, founder, Karnataka Vidyarthi Samithi to Jawaharlal Nehru, Bombay	File No. G-53, AIHMS Papers, NMML 389
10	22.10.46	AIHMS Resolution on Direct Action	Letter by M.V. Ganapati, Advocate, Madras, to the Secretary, AIHMS, Madras	File No. C-106, AIHMS Papers, NMML 392
11.	22.10.46	M.R. Jayakar: Congress Should Not Appease Muslim Separatism	Extracts from a letter by M.R. Jayakar to T.B. Sapru, Bombay	File No. 807, M.R. Jayakar Papers, NAI 392
12.	26.10.46	Muslim League's Communal Campaign in Bengal	Extracts from a letter by T. B. Sapru to M.R. Jayakar, Allahabad	File No. 807, M.R. Jayakar Papers, NAI 393
13.	2.11.46	Madan Mohan Malaviya Calls Hindus to Defend Themselves	Extracts from a news report, 'Pandit Malaviya's call to Hindus.'	<i>Hindustan Times</i> 393
14.	4.12.46	Hindu Mahasabha Proposes a United Front of Hindu Organisations	Circular letter by B.S. Moonje, Acting President, AIHMS, to leaders of various Hindu organisations, Nasik	File No. C-94, AIHMS Papers, NMML 394
15.	11.12.46	Hindu Mahasabha Warned Not to Make Inflammatory Speeches	Extracts from a letter by the District Magistrate, Gorakhpur, to the executive of the Mahasabha, Gorakhpur	File No. C-106, AIHMS Papers, NMML 395
16.	15.12.46	Restrictions on Hindu Mahasabha by the United Provinces Government	Extracts from a draft letter by the Secretary, Reception Committee, AIHMS, Gorakhpur, to the District Magistrate, Gorakhpur	File No. C-106, AIHMS Papers, NMML 395
17.	-	Hindu Mahasabha Blames Bengal League Ministry for Noakhali Tragedy	Extracts from a resolution passed at the Gorakhpur session of AIHM undated. Probably 29 December 1946.	File No. C-108 AIHM papers, NMML 396
18	27.12.46	AIHMS Conference at Gorakhpur	Extracts from Weekly Report No. 49	Weekly Reports, CID Records, Government of United Provinces, UPSA 397
19.	27.12.46	Hindu Communal Propaganda in the United Provinces	Extracts from Weekly Report No. 49	Weekly Reports, CID Records, Government of United Provinces, UPSA 398

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Pg No.</i>
20.	27.12.46	Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh Activities in the United Provinces	Extracts from Weekly Report No. 49	Weekly Reports, CID Records, Government of United Provinces, UPSA 398
21.	31.12.46	Hindu Mahasabha Proposes Formation of Hindustan National Guards	News report, 'National Guards for self-defence.'	<i>Hindustan Times</i> 399

2.vii Muslim League

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Pg No.</i>
1.	12.1.46	League Celebrates Central Assembly Election Victory	Extracts from a news report, 'League celebrations in Delhi.'	<i>Statesman</i> 400
2.	19.1.46	Muslim League on the Offensive in the Punjab	Extracts from a news report, 'Punjab premier puppet leader.'	<i>Statesman</i> 100
3.	8.2.46	Muslim League Activities in the United Provinces	Extracts from Weekly Report No. 6	Weekly Reports, CID Records, Government of United Provinces, UPSA 401
4.	22.2.46	Muslims of the Punjab Reject Unionists in Elections	Extracts from a news report, 'Well done, Punjab.'	<i>Dawn</i> 401
5.	7.3.46	League and Congress Discuss Formation of Stable Ministry for the Punjab	Extracts from a press release, 'Mamdot releases his letters to Congress Party leader.'	<i>Dawn</i> 402
6.	13.3.46	Non-League Muslims in the Punjab Ministry Unacceptable to Muslim League	Extracts from an editorial, 'Lord Wavell, we ask you.'	<i>Dawn</i> 403
7.	13.3.46	Radical Muslim Leaguers Ask for Hindu-Muslim Unity	Extracts from a news report, 'Fight against the British and the Hindu capitalist!'	<i>Free Press Journal</i> 404
8.	20.3.46	Muslim League Rejects Congress Muslim Nominee in the Punjab Ministry	Extracts from a news report, 'League policy is not to have Muslim Quislings.'	<i>Dawn</i> 404
9.	27.3.46	Jinnah Attempts to Break the Punjab Coalition	News report, 'Jinnah leaves the Punjab empty-handed.'	<i>Hindustan Times</i> 405
10.	10.4.46	Muslim League Legislators' Convention	Extracts from a news report, 'League dream of a Muslim Empire.'	<i>Hindustan Times</i> 405

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<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>		<i>Pg No.</i>
11.	9.6.46	The Punjab Muslim League Purges Communists	Extracts from a report, 'Red bogey in Punjab League.'	<i>People's Age</i>	406
12.	29.7.46	Muslim League Resolution on Direct Action Day	Text of resolution passed at a meeting of the Muslim League Council at Bombay	<i>Indian Annual Register</i> (1946), Vol. II, p. 177.	408
13.	20.10.46	Muslim League Enters Interim Government	Newspaper cuttings enclosed in the file: (a) 'League in office to work for Pakistan,' <i>Sunday Statesman</i> (b) 'Rioters warned,' <i>Hindustan Times</i>	File No. G-53, AIHMS Papers, NMML	409
14.	1.11.46	Khaksar Activities in the United Provinces	Extracts from Weekly Report No. 42	Weekly Reports, CID Records, Government of United Provinces, UPSA	410
15.	6.12.46	Muslim League Activities in the United Provinces	Extracts from Weekly Report No. 47	Weekly Reports, CID Records, Government of United Provinces, UPSA	410
16.	27.12.46	Muslim League Activities in the United Provinces	Extracts from Weekly Report No. 49	Weekly Reports, CID Records, Government of United Provinces, UPSA	410

2.viii Other Minority Groups and Scheduled Castes

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>		<i>Pg No.</i>
1.	3.1.46	Jalandhar Meeting of Minority Groups Opposed to Pakistan	Extracts from a newsletter, 'Take up Gandhiji's constructive programme.'	<i>Hindustan Times</i>	411
2.	19.1.46	Only Bone-fide Sikhs	Extracts from a representation by the Shiromani Gurudwara Prabandhak Committee, Amritsar, to the Home Secretary, GOI, Amritsar	File No. 31/5/46, Home (Establishments) Department, GOI, NAI	411
3.	1.4.46	Akalis Demand a Sikh State within India	News report, 'Sikhs demand separate state within Indian federation.'	<i>Hindustan Times</i>	411
4.	30.4.46	All Party Sikh Conference Opposes Akali Dal and the Partitioning of India	News report, 'Sikh opposition to division of India.'	<i>Hindustan Times</i>	412

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Pg No.</i>
5.	29.5.46	Akalis Demand Equal Status with Muslims	Extracts from a news report, 'Universal Sikh protest against Mission's plan.'	<i>Hindustan Times</i> 413
6.	11.6.46	All Party Panthic Conference for Direct Action Against Cabinet Mission	Extracts from a news report, 'All-Parties Panthic Conference leaders to take oath before Akal Takht today.'	<i>Bombay Chronicle</i> 413
7.	11.6.46	Panthic Sikh Conference Demands a Sikh State	Extracts from a news report, 'Sikhs demand separate state.'	<i>Hindustan Times</i> 414
8.	11.7.46	Panthic Boards to Boycott Constituent Assembly	Extracts from a news report, 'Sikhs to boycott Constituent Assembly.'	<i>Bombay Chronicle</i> 415
9.	18.7.46	B.R. Ambedkar Charges British Government with Breach of Faith	News report, 'Ambedkar threat of countrywide satyagraha.'	<i>Bombay Chronicle</i> 415
10.	15.8.46	Sikhs to Enter Constituent Assembly	Extracts from a news report, 'Sikhs fall in line.'	<i>Bombay Chronicle</i> 417
11.	27.8.46	Increased Representation of Scheduled Castes in Executive Council	Extracts from a news report, 'Hindu-Muslim parity at centre not justified.'	<i>Hindustan Times</i> 417
12.	14.10.46	Gurkhas Protest the Ban on <i>Kukries</i> in Calcutta	Letter by the General Secretary, All India Gurkha League, Calcutta, to the Police Commissioner, Calcutta	File No. 21/97/46, Home (Police), GOI, NAI 417

2.1x British Responses

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Pg No.</i>
1.	19.3.46	Can Government Servants Stand for Election to the Legislature?	In response to an enquiry raised by the Railway Department, the Establishments Section, Home Department, GOI, prepared this note	File No. 47/9/46, Home (Establishments), GOI, NAI 418
2.	20.3.46	Can Government Servants Become Members of Communal Organisations?	Extracts from notes circulated within the Establishments Section, Home Department, GOI	File No. 47/22/46, Home (Establishments), GOI, NAI 419

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Pg No.</i>
3.	14.10.46	Can Government Servants be Members of Political Organisations?	Letter by Mahadev Prasad, a clerk with the Post and Telegraph Department, to Vallabhbhai Patel, Jaipur. An English translation of Hindi original is included in the file.	File No. 47/34/46, Home (Establishments), GOI, NAI 422

3. Labour and Peasants

INTRODUCTION

3.A Labour Movements

3.A.i January

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Pg No.</i>
1.	7.1.46	Police Assault Strikers of Bombay Oil Companies	Extracts from a news report, 'Oil company strikers led into a trap.'	<i>Free Press Journal</i> 425
2.	13.1.46	Communist-led Strike Wave in Calcutta: Congress and League Attitudes	Extracts from an article, 'Calcutta's worker-humanity in action,' by Nikhil Chakravarty.	<i>People's Age</i> 425
3	17.1.46	Ambedkarites Keep Aloof from Nagpur Textile Strikes	Extracts from a news report, 'General strike of CP textile workers.'	<i>Free Press Journal</i> 428
4	27.1.46	AITUC and the Cabinet Mission	Enclosed in the file is a newspaper clipping, 'Cabinet Mission's scheme,' <i>Statesman</i>	File No. 9, AITUC Papers, NMML. 429

3.A.ii February

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Pg No.</i>
1.	-2.46	Trouble at Golden Rock, Tiruchirapally	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Madras Province for the first half of February 1946.	Fortnightly Reports, Public (General), Government of Madras, TNSA 430

3.A.iii March

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Pg No.</i>
1.	4.3.46	Government Employees Not to Stand in for Striking Postal Workers	Representation received by the Secretary, Home Department, GOI, from the Secretary, All India Federation of Ministerial Services Association, Nagpur	File No. 48/16, Home (Establishments), GOI, NAI 430

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Pg No.</i>
2.	5.3.46	Bombay Primary School Teachers' Strike	News report, '1000 teachers in city and suburbs go on strike.'	<i>Free Press Journal</i> 431
3.	14.3.46	Nagpur Workers Protest Against Cut in Food Rations	Memorandum by the District Magistrate, Nagpur, to the Commissioner, Nagpur Division, Nagpur	File No. 12, Political and Military Department, Government of CP and Berar, MPSA 431
4.	-.2.46	Discontent within Lower Police Ranks in Madras Province	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Madras Province for the first half of March 1946.	Fortnightly Reports, Public (General), Government of Madras, TNSA 432
5.	-.2.46	Communists Behind Labour Unrest in Madras Province	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Madras Province for the first half of March 1946.	File No. 18/3/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 432
6.	22.3.46	Delhi Policemen on Strike	News report, 'Delhi police strike.'	<i>Hindustan Times</i> 433
7.	23.3.46	British Troops Arrest Striking Policemen of Delhi	Extracts from a news report, 'Tear gas attack on Delhi policemen.'	<i>Statesman</i> 434
8.	28.3.46	Bombay Primary School Teachers Demand Living Wage	Extracts from a news report, 'Bombay teachers fight against starvation.'	<i>Free Press Journal</i> 436
9.	-.3.46	Striking Policemen of Bihar Form Union Under Congress Socialist Party	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Bihar for the second half of March 1946.	File No. 18/3/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 436
10.	-.3.46	Ration Cuts Lead to Labour Unrest in Calcutta and Dhaka	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Bengal for the second half of March 1946.	File No. 18/3/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 437
11.	-.3.46	Ration Cuts Cause Unrest Among U.P Government Employees and Police	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for United Provinces for the second half of March 1946.	File No. 18/3/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 438
12.	-.3.46	Communists and Labour Unrest in Madras Province	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Madras Province for the second half of March 1946.	File No. 18/3/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 439

3.A.iv April

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Pg No.</i>
1.	5.4.46	Congress Volunteers Replace Patna Striking Constables	News report, 'The boys can do it.'	<i>Free Press Journal</i> 439
2.	12.4.46	Sweepers' Strike in Bombay	News report, 'Government's attempt to break sweepers' strike.'	<i>Free Press Journal</i> 440

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Pg No.</i>
3.	12.4.46	Bombay Municipality's Offer to Sweepers	Extracts from an article, 'Facts of the sweepers' strike.'	<i>Free Press Journal</i> 442
4	13.4.46	Bombay Sweepers End Strike	Extracts from a news report, 'Bombay sweepers' strike ends.'	<i>Free Press Journal</i> 443
5	14.4.46	Police Open Fire on Narayanganj (Dhaka) Cotton Mill Workers	Extracts from a report, 'Workers fight police aided black marketeer bosses.'	<i>People's Age</i> 443
6.	-4.46	Congress Opposes Communist Militancy in Madras Province	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Madras Province for the first half of April 1946.	Fortnightly Reports, Public (General), Government of Madras, TNSA 444
7.	-4.46	Government of Madras Employees Restive	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Madras Province for the first half of April 1946.	Fortnightly Reports, Public (General), Government of Madras, TNSA 445
8.	-4.46	Bombay Dockyard and Railway Workers Give Notice of Strike	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Bombay Province for the first half of April 1946.	File No. 18/4/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 446
9.	-4.46	Trouble in Police Ranks of Calcutta and Dhaka	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Bengal for the first half of April 1946.	File No. 18/4/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 447
10.	-4.46	Discontent Among Government Employees of the United Provinces	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for the United Provinces for the first half of April 1946.	File No. 18/4/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 447
11.	18.4.46	M.K. Bose Protest Government Favouritism Towards M.N. Roy's Indian Federation of Labour	Press statement by Mrinal Kanti Bose, President, AITUC, published in <i>Free Press Journal</i> , under the heading 'Govt.'s labour policy.' A cutting is enclosed in the file.	File No. 9, AITUC Papers, NMML 448
12.	16.4.46	AITUC Report on Labour Situation (July 1945-April 1946)	Extracts from the AITUC Interim Report (1 July 1945 - 15 April 1946), presented by the General Secretary to the General Council, AITUC, Bombay	File No. 91, AITUC Papers, NMML 448
13.	18.4.46	Striking Policemen of Madras Discharged from Duty	News report, '104 Madras policemen sacked and paid off.'	<i>Free Press Journal</i> 452
14.	21.4.46	Bihar Ministry Urged to Make Concessions to Striking Constables	Article, 'Anti-imperialist awakening vilified as anti-Congress.'	<i>People's Age</i> 453

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>		<i>Pg No.</i>
15.	21.4.46	Bombay Corporation Criticised for Role in Sweepers' Strike	Extracts from a report, 'Bombay sweepers' fight for justice and win.' by P.B. Rangnekar.	<i>People's Age</i>	455
16.	21.4.46	Dhaka Police Constables Demonstrate	News report, 'Dacca policemen on strike.'	<i>Hindustan Times</i>	456
17.	-4.46	Labour Unrest in Madras Province	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Madras Province for the second half of April 1946.	File No. 18/4/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI	456
18.	-4.46	Strikes Spread Across Bengal	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Bengal for the second half of April 1946.	File No. 18/4/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI	457
19.	-4.46	Labour Unrest in the United Provinces	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for United Province for the second half of April 1946.	File No. 18/4/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI	458
20.	-4.46	Bihar Railwaymen Ballot for Strike	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Bihar for the second half of April 1946.	File No. 18/4/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI	458
21.	-4.46	Union Rivalry Amongst Assam Railwaymen	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Assam for the second half of April 1946.	File No. 18/4/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI	459

3.A.v May

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>		<i>Pg No.</i>
1.	2.5.46	Calcutta May Day Rally Addressed by R. Palme Dutt	Report of the General Secretary, Bengal Provincial Committee, AITUC, Calcutta, forwarded to the Editor, <i>Trade Union Record</i> , Bombay, Calcutta	File No. 50, AITUC Papers, NMML.	459
2.	2.5.46	Kerala Regional TUC Resolution Supporting Pappinisseri (Malabar) Strikers	Draft report of a meeting of the Kerala Regional Trade Union Committee held on 28 April 1946 at Calicut.	File No. 117, AITUC Papers, NMML	460
3.	2.5.46	May Day in Gauhati, Assam	A copy of the resolutions adopted by the Gauhati Branch, Bengal and Assam Railroad Workers' Union, forwarded to the General Secretary, AITUC Bombay, Gauhati	File No. 46, AITUC Papers, NMML	461

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<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Pg No</i>
4.	2.5.46	May Day Demonstration Against Food Shortages in Dhotarkheda, Bombay	Handwritten press communiqué by the Secretary, Girmi Mazdoor Sangh, Taluka Kisan Sabha, Ellichpur; Ellichpur	File No. 99, AITUC Papers, NMML 462
5.	4.5.46	AITUC Solidarity Action with Government Press Strikers	Letter by Mrinal Kanti Bose, President, to Manek Gandhi, Assistant Secretary, AITUC, Calcutta	File No. 9, AITUC Papers, NMML 463
6	6.5.46	All India Railwaymen's Federation's Unanimous Decision to Strike	News report, 'Railwaymen decide to strike.'	<i>Free Press Journal</i> 463
7.	-.5.46	Madras Industries and Labour Minister Against Indiscriminate Strikes	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Madras Province for the first half of May 1946.	File No. 18/5/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 465
8.	-.5.46	Government and Employers Intervene to Placate Striking Workers in Bengal	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Bengal for the first half of May 1946.	File No. 18/5/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 466
9.	-.5.46	UP to Extend Scope of Weekly Holidays Act, 1942	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for the United Provinces for the first half of May 1946.	File No. 18/5/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 466
10.	-.5.46	Railway Services Dislocated in the Punjab	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Punjab for the first half of May 1946.	File No. 18/5/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 467
11.	-.5.46	Bihar Railwaymen Vote for General Strike	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Bihar for the first half of May 1946.	File No. 18/5/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 467
12.	-.5.46	May Day Unrest on Sind Railway	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Sind for the first half of May 1946.	File No. 18/5/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 468
13.	-.5.46	Police Open Fire on Blackshirts of Madurai, Tamil Nadu	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Madras province for the first half of May 1946.	TNSA 468
14.	21.5.46	Strikes Hamper South Indian Railway	News report, 'Madras railway strike spreads.'	<i>Free Press Journal</i> 469
15.	25.5.46	Guntur (Andhra Pradesh) Cart Pullers Confront Police and Employers	Extracts from a news report, 'Guntur strikers bare chests before police bullets,' by K.V. Basavaiah.	<i>People's Age</i> 469
16.	26.5.46	Bata Shoe Workers Take Over Batanagar Factory	Extracts from a report, 'Bengal Bata shoe workers rise up against white Czech maliks.'	<i>People's Age</i> 470

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Pg No.</i>
17.	31.5.46	Kanpur in Grip of Strikes	News report, 'Cawnpore in the grip of strikes.'	<i>Free Press Journal</i> 471
18.	-5.46	Workers in Militant Mood in Madras Province	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Madras Province for the first half of May 1946.	Fortnightly Reports, Public (General), Government of Madras, TNSA 471
19.	-5.46	Bengal Government Partially Successful in Containing Strikes	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Bengal for the second half of May 1946.	File No. 18/5/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 472
20.	-5.46	Shrinking of the Indian Postwar Economy Blamed for Worker Unrest	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for United Provinces for the second half of May 1946.	File No. 18/5/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 473

3.A.vi June

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Pg No.</i>
1.	8.6.46	CP and Berar Government to Deal Firmly with Strikers	Extracts from a news report, 'CP measures to meet railway strike situation.'	<i>Hindustan Times</i> 474
2.	9.6.46	Bombay Ministry Uses Defence of India Rules Against Strikers	Extracts from a report, 'In Bombay, Mukund Iron workers' struggle.'	<i>People's Age</i> 474
3.	14.6.46	Jayaprakash Narayan Blames Government and Railway Board for the Impending Strike	Extracts from a news report, 'People must stand by hard-hit railwaymen.'	<i>Free Press Journal</i> 475
4.	14.6.46	The United Provinces Government Suggests a Soft Approach Towards Strikers	Extracts from paragraphs for Monthly Summary for the Cabinet	File No. 5/12/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 475
5.	-6.46	Threat of Rail Strike Looms Large in Bengal	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Bengal for the first half of June 1946.	File No. 18/6/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 476
6.	-6.46	Labour in the United Provinces Divides Along Communal Lines	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for the United Provinces for the first half of June 1946.	File No. 18/6/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 476
7.	-6.46	Punjab Communists Spread Labour Unrest to Coincide with Railway Strike	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for the Punjab for the first half of June 1946.	File No. 18/6/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 477
8.	16.6.46	Congress Mill Owner of Pappinesseri (Malabar) Confronted by Communist Workers	Extracts from a news report, 'Terror over Pappi-nesseri.'	<i>People's Age</i> 477
9.	16.6.46	Darjeeling Communist MLA's Arrest Causes Trouble	Extracts from a report, 'Darjeeling tea planters let loose hell on labourers.'	<i>People's Age</i> 478

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<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Pg No.</i>
10.	18.6.46	Government Considers Measures to Tackle Railway Strike	Extracts from Paragraphs for Monthly Summary for the Cabinet	File No. 5/12/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 478
11.	22.6.46	Hartal and Riots in Madurai Following Jawaharlal Nehru's Arrest in Kashmir	Report by the District Superintendent of Police, Madura North, to the Inspector General of Police, Madras, Madura North	File No. 2012, Public (General), Government of Madras, TNSA 479
12	28.6.46	Riots in Madurai Subside	Extracts from a letter by the District Magistrate, Madura, to E.M. Gawne, Chief Secretary, Public (General), Government of Madras, Madura	File No. 2012, Public (General), Government of Madras, TNSA 481
13.	-6.46	Inter Union Communal Rivalry, and Mob Violence in Madurai	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Madras Province for the second half of June 1946	Fortnightly Reports, Public (General), Government of Madras, TNSA 481
14.	-6.46	Concessions to Workers Cools Unrest in Madras Province	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Madras Province for the first half of June 1946	File No. 18/6/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 482
15.	-6.46	UP Congress MLA's Talk Labour Back to Work	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for United Provinces for the second half of June 1946	File No. 18/6/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 483
16.	-6.46	Agreement Between Punjab Railway Management Workers and Welcomed	Extracts from Fortnightly Report from the Punjab for the second half of June 1946	File No. 18/6/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 484
17.	-6.46	Mineworkers Remain Unsettled in Bihar	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Bihar for the second half of June 1946	File No. 18/6/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 484

3.A.vii July

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Pg No</i>
1.	6.7.46	Proposed Amendments to Bombay Industrial Disputes Act, 1938	Letter by the Chief Secretary, Political and Services Department, Government of Bombay, to the General Secretary, Bombay Provincial Trade Union Committee, Bombay	File No. 90, AITUC Papers, NMML 484
2.	7.7.46	Postmen Threaten Action for Better Terms	Extracts from an article, 'All India postal general strike from July 11 unless demands are met.'	<i>People's Age</i> 485

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>		<i>Pg No.</i>
3.	9.7.46	AITUC Not Interested in Holding Anti-Franco Demonstrations	Extracts from a letter by M.K. Bose, President, to Manek Gandhi, Assistant Secretary, AITUC, Bombay	File No. 9, AITUC Papers, NMML	485
4.	12.7.46	Jawaharlal Nehru for Government Adjudication in Postal Strike	Extracts from a news report, 'Frantic bid to keep up delivery service.'	<i>Free Press Journal</i>	486
5.	12.7.46	Impact of Postal Strike	Extracts from a report, 'Countrywide dislocation of postal service.'	<i>Hindustan Times</i>	486
6.	12.7.46	Jawaharlal Nehru's Statement Regarding Postal Strike	Extracts from a news report, 'Nehru's appeal to Govt.'	<i>Hindustan Times</i>	488
7.	14.7.46	Diary of Major Strikes	A column, 'Strike Diary,' was a regular feature of <i>People's Age</i> during this period of labour unrest, giving details of strikers by the industry at various places across India.	<i>People's Age</i>	489
8.	14.7.46	Parel (Bombay) Rail Workers Force Management to Climb Down	Extracts from a news report, 'G.I.P. Parel workshop strike.' by P.B. Rangnekar.	<i>People's Age</i>	493
9.	15.7.46	Bombay Provincial Trade Union Committee and the Proposed Amendments to Bombay Industrial Disputes Act, 1938	Extracts from copy of a letter by the Acting General Secretary, Bombay Provincial Trade Union Committee, to the Chief Secretary, Political and Services Department, Government of Bombay, Bombay	File No. 90, AITUC Papers, NMML	494
10.	-.7.46	Strike Situation in Madras Province	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Madras Province for the first half of July 1946	Fortnightly Reports, Public (General), Government of Madras, TNSA	494
11.	-.7.46	Strike Situation in Bombay Province	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Bombay Province for the first half of July 1946	File No. 18/7/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI	495
12.	-.7.46	Fewer Fresh Strikes in Bengal	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Bengal for the first half of July 1946	File No. 18/7/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI	496
13.	-.7.46	Postal Strike in the United Provinces	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for United Province for the first half of July 1946	File No. 18/7/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI	497

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Pg No</i>
14.	~.7.46	Mill Owners Threaten Lock-outs in the Punjab	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Punjab for the first half of July 1946	File No. 18/7/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 497
15.	.7.46	Postal Strike Makes Bihar Industrial Outlook Gloomy	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Bihar for the first half of July 1946	File No. 18/7/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 498
16.	7.46	Police Join Ranks of the Disaffected in Assam	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Assam for the first half of July 1946	File No. 18/7/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 498
17.	~.7.46	Communist Professional Agitators Blamed for Strikes in Delhi	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Delhi for the first half of July 1946	File No. 18/7/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 500
18.	17.7.46	Imperial Bank Clerks to Go on Strike as of 1 August	News report, 'Imperial Bank clerks in Bengal to strike.'	<i>Free Press Journal</i> 500
19.	18.7.46	General Strike Threatened if Postal Strike Not Settled	Extracts from news report, 'Threat of General Strike.'	<i>Free Press Journal</i> 501
20.	18.7.46	Vallabhbhai Patel Urges Postal Authorities to Take Strike Seriously	News report, 'Sardar Patel warns against official callousness.'	<i>Hindustan Times</i> 501
21.	19.7.46	Railwaymen Threaten Sympathy Action with Postal Workers	Extracts from a news report, 'Strike threat by railwaymen.'	<i>Hindustan Times</i> 502
22.	19.7.46	Government Concedes Demands of Postal Strikers	Extracts from a news report, 'Adjudicator's award in postal dispute.'	<i>Hindustan Times</i> 502
23.	21.7.46	Postal Strikers Continue Action Despite Government Threats	Extracts from an article, 'Victory to postmen!'	<i>People's Age</i> 503
24.	21.7.46	Krishna Prasada Report Reveals Plight of Postmen	Article, 'Snapshots from suppressed Krishna Prasada Report.'	<i>People's Age</i> 504
25.	23.7.46	General Strike in Support of Postal Workers	Extracts from a news report, 'General strike total success.'	<i>Free Press Journal</i> 504
26.	28.7.46	South Indian Railway Strike Begins at Golden Rock	Press Communique by the General Manager, South Indian Railway, Trichinopoly	File No. 2040, Public (General), Government of Madras, TNSA 505
27.	28.7.46	Sympathy Strikes for Postmen in Bombay	Extracts from a news report, 'Bombay's working masses rally behind postmen.' by P.B. Rangnekar.	<i>People's Age</i> 506

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Pg No.</i>
28.	28.7.46	Proposed Amendments to Bombay Industrial Disputes Act, 1938	Extracts from an article, 'Move to further curtail workers' rights.' by P.B. Rangnekar.	<i>People's Age</i> 506
29.	30.7.46	Delhi Municipal Workers on Strike	Extracts from a news report, '3000 municipal workers on strike.'	<i>Hindustan Times</i> 508
30.	-.7.46	Despite Inconveniences Bengal Public Supports Strike	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Bengal for the second half of July 1946.	File No. 18/7/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 508
31.	-.7.46	Impact of Strikes Uneven in the Punjab	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Punjab for the second half of July 1946.	File No. 18/7/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 510
32.	-.7.46	Communists Spread Strike Fever in CP and Berar	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for CP for the second half of July 1946.	File No. 18/7/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 510
33.	-.7.46	Police and Postal Strikes Affect Life in Assam	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Assam for the second half of July 1946.	File No. 18/7/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 511
34.	-.7.46	Jawaharlal Nehru's Cautious Criticism of Strike Wave	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Delhi for the second half of July 1946.	File No. 18/7/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 512

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<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Pg No.</i>
1.	2.8.46	Delhi Choked with Garbage during Sweepers' Strike	Extracts from a news report, 'Armed police guard town hall from demonstrators.'	<i>Hindustan Times</i> 512
2.	3.8.46	Golden Rock Strikers Intimidate Blacklegs	Extracts from a letter by T. Varghese, Collector, Trichinopoly, to S.V. Ramamurti, Chief Secretary, Government of Madras, Trichinopoly	File No. 2040, Public (General), Government of Madras, TNSA 512
3.	3.8.46	Bombay Postmen to Remain on Strike	Extracts from a news report, 'Bombay postmen to stay on strike.'	<i>Hindustan Times</i> 513
4.	4.8.46	Madras Provincial Trade Union Congress Cal. for Sympathy Strikes with Postmen	Extracts from an article, 'One lakh workers down tools in Madras.'	<i>People's Age</i> 513
5.	4.8.46	A Diary of Strikes in Calcutta	Article, 'First fortnight of postal strike in Calcutta.' by Nikhil Chakravarty.	<i>People's Age</i> 514

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<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Pg No.</i>
6.	5.8.46	M.K. Gandhi's Advice to Strikers	Extracts from a news report, 'Strikers must submit to arbitration.'	<i>Free Press Journal</i> 517
7.	6.8.46	Imperial Bank Staff Continue Strike	News report, 'Imperial Bank strike continues.'	<i>Free Press Journal</i> 517
8.	8.8.46	Strikers Begin to Trickle Back to Work at Golden Rock	Letter by T.A. Varghese, Collector, Trichinopoly, to S.V. Ramamurti, Chief Secretary, Government of Madras, Trichinopoly	File No. 2040, Public (General), Government of Madras, TNSA 518
9.	8.8.46	AITUC <i>versus</i> Indian Federation of Labour	Extracts from a letter by M.K. Bose, President, to N.M. Joshi, General Secretary, AITUC, Bombay	File No. 9, AITUC Papers, NMML. 518
10.	9.8.46	Industrial Unrest, According to the Labour Department, GOI	News report, 'An estimate of the strike wave in Bombay.'	<i>Free Press Journal</i> 519
11.	-	South Indian Railway Labour Union Leaflet	An undated (probably 10 August 1946) translation of a Tamil leaflet issued by South Indian Railway Labour Union, Golden Rock Branch.	File No. 2040, Public (General), Government of Madras, TNSA 520
12.	10.8.46	Abdul Bari's Rough Methods at Jamshedpur	Extracts from a letter Jawaharlal Nehru to Jayaprakash Narayan, Wardha	File No. 160, AITUC Papers, NMML. 521
13.	11.8.46	3 Lakhs Attend Rally in Calcutta	Extracts from an article, 'Unprecedented rally of over 3 lakhs in Calcutta.'	<i>People's Age</i> ~ 521
14.	11.8.46	16 Lakhs Participate in the 29 July Strike in Calcutta	Article, 'Biggest ever hartal in our national movement.' By Nikhil Chakravarty.	<i>People's Age</i> 521
15.	11.8.46	Government of the United Provinces Labour Policy	Extracts from an article, 'U.P. Congress government enunciates labour policy.' By Ramesh Sinha.	<i>People's Age</i> 524
16.	11.8.46	Bombay's Women Support Bank Strikers	Extracts from a report, 'National Bank strike.'	<i>People's Age</i> 525
17.	11.8.46	5000 Come Out at Golden Rock for Reinstatement of Dismissed Colleagues	Extracts from a report, '5000 Golden Rock workers on strike.'	<i>People's Age</i> 525
18.	11.8.46	40,000 Military Accounts Clerks to Go on Strike	Extracts from an report, '40,000 Military Accounts Clerks go on strike'.	<i>People's Age</i> 525

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>		<i>Pg No.</i>
19.	11.8.46	Vallabhbhai Patel's Role in Ending the Postal Strike	Extracts from an article, 'Postmen could have secured better terms.'	<i>People's Age</i>	526
20.	13.8.46	Stationmasters Join Workers in Golden Rock strike	Extracts from a copy of report by V. Natesan, Superintendent of Police, Special Branch, CID, forwarded to the Chief Secretary, Government of Madras, Madras	File No. 2040, Public (General), Government of Madras, TNSA	527
21.	13.8.46	Engine Drivers and Firemen Join Golden Rock Strike	Copy of a report by the District Superintendent of Police, Trichinopoly, forwarded to the Chief Secretary, Government of Madras, by the Inspector General of Police, Madras	File No. 2040, Public (General), Government of Madras, TNSA	528
22.	13.8.46	Congress Working Committee on Hindustan Mazdoor Sewak Sangh	Copy of resolution passed by the Working Committee, Indian National Congress, Wardha	File No. 123, Jayaprakash Narayan Papers, NMML	529
23.	14.8.46	Bengal Steel Workers Go on Strike	News report, '11,000 Bengal steel workers on strike.'	<i>Free Press Journal</i>	529
24.	15.8.46	A Large Number of Minor Strikes in Madras Province	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Madras Province for the first half of July 1946.	Fortnightly Reports, Public (General), Government of Madras, TNSA	529
25.	16.8.46	Lathi Charges on Picketing Strikers	Extracts from a column of despatches from different cities, 'Police use lathis freely against strikers.'	<i>Free Press Journal</i>	530
26.	17.8.46	Threat of General Strike on South Indian Railway	Extracts from copy of a report by the District Superintendent of Police, Trichinopoly, to the Inspector General of Police, Madras, and forwarded by the latter to the Chief Secretary, Government of Madras.	File No. 2040, Public (General), Government of Madras, TNSA	531
27.	20.8.46	Public Warned Not to Risk Railway Journeys During Strike	Extracts from copy of report by V. Natesan, Superintendent of Police, Special Branch, CID, forwarded to the Chief Secretary, Government of Madras, Madras	File No. 2040, Public (General), Government of Madras, TNSA	532

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Pg No.</i>
28.	21.8.46	Public Enquiry Demanded into the Alleged Killing of an Old Woman by Police	Leaflet issued by the Madras Committee, Communist Party of India, Madras	File No. 2695, Public (General), Government of Madras, TNSA 532
29.	22.8.46	Programme of Strike Action on South Indian Railway	Copy of a report by the District Superintendent of Police, Trichinopoly, to the Inspector General of Police, Madras, and forwarded by the latter to the Chief Secretary, Government of Madras.	File No. 2040, Public (General), Government of Madras, TNSA 533
30.	20.8.46	Porters, Pointsmen, Gangmen and Gatekeepers to Join SIR Strikers	Extracts from a copy of report by V. Natesan, Superintendent of Police, Special Branch, CID, forwarded to the Chief Secretary, Government of Madras, Madras	File No. 2040, Public (General), Government of Madras, TNSA 534
31.	25.8.46	An Unprecedented Strike Wave in Bihar	Article, 'Workers' upsurge in Bihar.'	<i>People's Age</i> 534
32.	25.8.46	Military Accounts Clerks Strike	Article, 'Military Accounts clerks down pens.'	<i>People's Age</i> 537
33.	25.8.46	Madras Corporation Workers Fight Repression	Extracts from an article, '10,000 Madras Corporation workers on strike.'	<i>People's Age</i> 539
34.	25.8.46	General Strike on South Indian Railway	Extracts from a news report, 'South Indian Railway general strike.'	<i>Hindustan Times</i> 539
35.	26.8.46	Police Open Fire on Strikers in Madras Province	Copy of a bulletin by the Inspector General of Police, Madras, forwarded to the Chief Secretary, Government of Madras, Madras	File No. 2040, Public (General), Government of Madras, TNSA 539
36.	26.8.46	South Indian Railway Guards Track Against Sabotage	Extracts from a news report, 'Railway traffic in the South comes to a standstill.'	<i>Free Press Journal</i> 540
37.	27.8.46	Aruna Asaf Ali: Railway Strike "Most Inopportune."	Extracts from a news report, 'Madura women demonstrators clash with police.'	<i>Free Press Journal</i> 541
38.	28.8.46	White collar Militancy	News report, 'White-collar workers in warpath.'	<i>Free Press Journal</i> 541
39.	29.8.46	South Indian Railway Strike Turns Violent	Extracts from a news report, 'SIR strike takes violent turn.'	<i>Hindustan Times</i> 543

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Pg No.</i>
40.	29.8.46	Madras Premier Condemns South Indian Railway Strike	News report, 'Prakasam condemns strike.'	<i>Hindustan Times</i> 544
41.	29.8.46	The Strike at Pratap Mills, Amalner	Statement by S.G. Brahme, Acting General Secretary, Amalner Girni Kamgar Union, Amalner	File No. 78, AITUC Papers, NMML 544
42.	-.8.46	Train Services Restricted to Daylight Hours During Strike	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Madras Province for the second half of August 1946	Fortnightly Reports, Public (General), Government of Madras, TNSA 549

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<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Pg No.</i>
1.	1.9.46	A Critique of Congress Labour Policy	Article, 'Employers' arguments trotted out against workers' fight for living conditions.'	<i>People's Age</i> 549
2.	1.9.46	Madras Workers' and Students' Support Municipal Strikers	Extracts from an article, 'Workers and students voice indignant protest.'	<i>People's Age</i> 551
3.	1.9.46	Strike Halts Entire South Indian Railway	Extracts from an article, 'S.I.R. workers stand up to bosses' offensive.'	<i>People's Age</i> 552
4.	1.9.46	Military Accounts Clerks and Authorities on Collision Course	Extracts from an article, 'The Military Accounts strike continues.'	<i>People's Age</i> 552
5.	1.9.46	Brutal Force Used to Put Down Madras Corporation Strike	Extracts from a news report, 'Brutal terror let loose on Madras Corporation strikers.'	<i>People's Age</i> 552
6.	1.9.46	Giridih and Bokaro Coal Miners Threaten Strike Action	Statement by Barin Dey, Organising Secretary, Coal Workers' Union, Giridih, Giridih	File No. 10, AITUC Papers, NMML 553
7.	3.9.46	South Indian Railway Strike Statistics	Press communiqué issued by the General Manager's Office, South Indian Railway, Trichinopoly	File No. 2040, Public (General), Government of Madras, TNSA 554
8.	4.9.46	United Provinces Provincial Congress Committee's Draft Statement on Labour Policy	Draft statement prepared by Hariharnath Shastri, Convenor, Labour Subcommittee, United Provinces Provincial Congress Committee	File No. 163, Jayaprakash Narayan Papers, NMML 554

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<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Pg No.</i>
9.	5.9.46	Police Fire on South Indian Railway Strikers	Extracts from a letter by T.A. Varghese, Collector, Trichinopoly, to S.V. Ramamurti, Chief Secretary, Government of Madras, Trichinopoly	File No. 2040, Public (General), Government of Madras, TNSA 557
10.	8.9.46	Police Firing at Amalner and Golden Rock Condemned by Different Unions	Extracts from a copy of a resolution passed at a public meeting in Ahmedabad on 8 September 1946 under the joint auspices of the Gujarat Regional Trade Union Council, Communist Party Mill Kamdar Union, and B.B. & C.I. Railwaymen's Union.	File No. 141, AITUC Papers, NMML. 558
11.	8.9.46	Amalner Strike Leader Shot in Police Firing	Extracts from an article, 'Reckless police firing on peaceful meeting.'	<i>People's Age</i> 559
12.	9.9.46	Nagpur Government Press Workers on Strike	Extracts from a pamphlet, 'Heroic strike of Government Press workers,' published by H.K. Vyas, Acting President, Press Employees Association, Nagpur	File No. 72, Political and Military Department, Government of CP and Berar, MP&A 560
13.	12.9.46	Congress Labour Leaders Arrested During Lucknow General Strike	Extracts from a news report, 'General labour strike in Lucknow.'	<i>Hindustan Times</i> 561
14.	13.9.46	Confrontation with Ministry over Arrested Lucknow Strike Leaders	Extracts from a news report, 'General labour strike in Lucknow.'	<i>Free Press Journal</i> 561
15.	-9.46	South Indian Railway Workers Begin to Return to Work	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Madras Province for the first half of September 1946	Fortnightly Reports, Public (General), Government of Madras, TNSA 563
16.	-9.46	Muslim Labour of Bengal Slow to Return to Work After Communal Riots	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Bengal for the first half of September 1946	File No. 18/9/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 563
17.	-9.46	Labour Situation Remains Unsettled in the United Provinces	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for United Provinces for the first half of September 1946.	File No. 18/9/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 564
18.	-9.46	Labour Situation Unpredictable in the Punjab	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Punjab for the first half of September 1946	File No. 18/9/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 564

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Pg No.</i>
19.	-9.46	Strike Wave in Bihar Begins to Abate	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Bihar for the first half of September 1946	File No. 18/9/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 565
20.	-9.46	The CP and Berar Ministry Brings Pressure to Bear on Communists	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for CP and Berar for the first half of September 1946	File No. 18/9/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 565
21.	-9.46	Labour Situation Reported as Unsatisfactory in Sind	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Sind for the first half of September 1946	File No. 18/9/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 566
22.	16.9.46	South Indian Railway Strike Leaders Arrested	Extracts from a report by E.L. Cox, Deputy Superintendent, Government Railway Police, Trichinopoly, to Inspector General of Police, Madras, Trichinopoly	File No. 2010, Public (General), Government of Madras, TNSA 567
23.	16.9.46	Labour Conditions in Coalmines of Bihar	Report by V.M. Shah, Conciliation Officer for Bihar, Department of Labour, G.O.I., Jamadoba	File No. 152, Jayaprakash Narayan Papers, NMML 567
24.	17.9.46	Strikers Returning to Work—Statistics Questioned	Extracts from a letter by Manek Gandhi, Assistant Secretary, to N.M. Joshi, General Secretary, AITUC, Bombay	File No. 8, AITUC Papers, NMML 569
25.	20.9.46	Monghyr Citizens Demand Reinstatement of Dismissed Policemen Strike	Resolution adopted at a public meeting by the citizens of Monghyr	File No. 159, Jayaprakash Narayan Papers, NMML 570
26.	22.9.46	Congress and the Hindustan Mazdoor Sewak Sangh	Extracts from a copy of a letter by P.H. Patwardhan, Member, Working Committee, Indian National Congress, to the General Secretary, AICC, New Delhi	File No. 123, Jayaprakash Narayan Papers, NMML 570
27.	22.9.46	Doubts Raised Over Reports of the Ending of South Indian Railway Strike	Extracts from a news report, 'Repression fails to break SIR strike.'	<i>People's Age</i> 571
28.	23.9.46	Military Accounts Clerks Victimized Despite Calling off Strike	Letter by Damodar Swarup Seth, Working President, All India Federation of Military Accounts Unions, Lucknow, at Jawaharlal Nehru, Lucknow	File No. 162, Jayaprakash Narayan Papers, NMML 571

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Pg No.</i>
29.	23.9.46	Trade Union Action Against Communal Riots	Extracts from a letter by the General Secretary, Bombay Provincial Trade Union Congress, to the Home Minister, Government of Bombay, Bombay	File No. 90, AITUC Papers, NMML. 573
30	25.9.46	South Indian Railway Returns to Normal	Extracts from a letter by E.L. Cox, Deputy Superintendent, Government Railway Police, Trichinopoly, to the Inspector General of Police, Madras, Trichinopoly	File No. 2040, Public (General), Government of Madras, TNSA 573
31.	26.9.46	Proposal for a Federation of Central Government Employees Unions	Letter by K.M. Sharma, Secretary, Military Finance Employees' Union, New Delhi, to Jayaprakash Narayan, Delhi	File No. 162, Jayaprakash Narayan Papers, NMML. 574
32.	28.9.46	Labour Situation in CP and Berar	Extracts from Police Abstract of Intelligence, Vol. LXI, No. 39, Nagpur	File No. 72, Political and Military Department, Government of CP and Berar, MP&A 575
33	28.9.46	Opposition to Proposed Industrial Relations Bill	Statement by N.M. Joshi, General Secretary, AITUC, Bombay	File No. 91, AITUC Papers, NMML. 575
34	29.9.46	Congress and Communists Battle it out in Kanpur	Article, 'Pant Ministry declares war on Cawnpore workers.'	<i>People's Age</i> 578
35.	29.9.46	Giridih Miners Give Strike Notice	Extracts from an article, 'No coal for Railway Board from September 24.'	<i>People's Age</i> 581
36	29.9.46	Municipal Workers' Strikes Reviewed	Article, 'India's municipal workers on the march.' by F.K. Vyas	<i>People's Age</i> 581
37.	-9.46	Labour Report from Bengal	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Bengal for the second half of September 1946.	File No. 18/9/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 582
38	9.46	No Improvement in Labour Situation in the United Provinces	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for United Provinces for the second half of September 1946	File No. 18/9/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 583
39.	-9.46	Future Labour Trouble Not Ruled Out in the Punjab	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Punjab for the second half of September 1946	File No. 18/9/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 583

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>		<i>Pg No.</i>
40.	-9.46	Agreements Reached with Strikers in Bihar	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Bihar for the second half of September 1946	File No. 18/9/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI	584
41.	-9.46	Communist-Sponsored Strikes Spread in CP and Berar	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for CP and Berar for the first half of September 1946	File No. 18/9/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI	584
42.	-9.46	Labour Situation Uneasy in Assam Tea Gardens and Oilfields	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Assam for the second half of September 1946	File No. 18/9/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI	585
43.	-9.46	Aruna Asaf Ali Elected President of CPWD Clerks Union	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Delhi for the second half of September 1946	File No. 18/9/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI	586

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<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>		<i>Pg No</i>
1.	13.10.46	Amalner Martyr's Day	Extracts from an article, 'Amalner workers can never be crushed.'	<i>People's Age</i>	586
	19.10.46	AITUC's International Contacts	Extracts from a copy of a letter, 19 October 1946 by R.A. Khedgikar, on behalf of the General Secretary, AITUC, to George Frank, BWIU [?], Melbourne, Australia	File No. 35, AITUC Papers, NMML	586
3.	27.10.46	Giridih Miners Down Tools	Extracts from an article, Giridih coal mine strikers wage relentless battle	<i>People's Age</i>	587

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<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>		<i>Pg No</i>
1.	1.11.46	Communalism in Kanpur's Labour Ranks	Extracts from Weekly Report No. 42	Weekly Reports, CID Records, Government of the United Provinces, UPSA.	588
2.	1.11.46	Bombay Government Statement Regarding Amalner Firing	Copy of press statement by Gulzarlal Nanda, Labour Minister, Government of Bombay	File No. 11, AITUC Papers, NMML	588
3.	1.11.46	Bombay Provincial TUC Registers Disapproval of Industrial Relations Bill	Resolution adopted by Bombay Provincial Trade Union Committee	File No. 72, AITUC Papers, NMML	589

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<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>		<i>Pg No.</i>
4.	3.11.46	Railway Board Concedes to Giridih Strikers	Extracts from an article, Giridih miners glorious victory	<i>People's Age</i>	590
5.	9.11.46	Tribulations of the Conciliation Officer for Bihar	Extracts from a letter by V.M. Shah, Conciliation Officer for Bihar, Department of Labour, GOI, to Jayaprakash Narayan, Jamadoba	File No. 152, Jayaprakash Narayan Papers, NMML	590
6.	10.11.46	Jagjivan Ram Introduces Trade Dispute Act in Central Assembly	Editorial, 'Withdraw anti-strike Bill.'	<i>People's Age</i>	591
7.	10.11.46	Strike Diary (15-31 October 1946)	Featured column, 'Strike diary (October 15 to 31).'	<i>People's Age</i>	593
8.	11.11.46	Police Open Fire on Communists in Coimbatore, Tamil Nade	Report by F.W.A. Morris, District Magistrate, Coimbatore, to the Chief Secretary, Public Department, Government of Madras, Coimbatore	File No. 2701, Public (General), Government of Madras, TNSA	596
9.	12.11.46	Trouble Spreads in Coimbatore	Extracts from a report by F.W. Morris, District Magistrate, Coimbatore, to the Chief Secretary, Government of Madras, Coimbatore	File No. 2701, Public (General), Government of Madras, TNSA	598
10.	17.11.4	Hindustan Mazdoor Sevak Sangh Approves Bombay Industrial Relations Bill	Extracts from the resolutions passed by Central Board, Hindustan Mazdoor Sevak Sangh, New Delhi	File No. 123, Jayaprakash Narayan Papers, NMML	600
11.	17.11.46	Hindustan Mazdoor Sevak Sangh	Extracts from a report by Working Committee Hindustan Mazdoor Sevak Sangh, New Delhi	File No. 123, Jayaprakash Narayan Papers, NMML	600
12.	17.11.46	Nagpur Textile Workers Strike	Extracts from an article, 22,000 Nagpur textiles workers strike	<i>People's Age</i>	601
13.	17.11.46	CP and Berar Miners Declare General Strike	Copy of wireless message from District Superintendent of Police, Chhindwara, to Inspector General of Police, Nagpur	File No. 3-A/1947, Political and Military Department, Government of CP and Berar, MPSA	602

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Pg No.</i>
14.	18.11.46	Action Against Coal Miners of Pench and Kanhan Valleys (CP and Berar)	Report by District Superintendent of Police, Chhindwara, to Inspector General of Police, Nagpur	File No. 3-A/1947, Political and Military Department, Government of CP and Berar, MPSA 602
15.	20.11.46	Resolutions of Hindustan Mazdoor Sevak Sangh	Extracts from the resolutions passed by Central Board, Hindustan Mazdoor Sevak Sangh, New Delhi	File No. 123, Jayaprakash Narayan Papers, NMML 605
16.	20.11.46	<i>Amrita Bazar Patrika</i> Workers' Strike	Statement by Surinder Mohan Ghosh, President, Bengal Provincial Congress Committee	File No. 158, Jayaprakash Narayan Papers, NMML 606
17.	24.11.46	Police Fire on Coimbatore Strikers	Extracts from an article, 'The battle of Coimbatore.' By N.K. Krishnan.	<i>People's Age</i> 607
18.	27.11.46	Indian Journalists' Association Supports <i>Amrita Bazar Patrika</i> Strikers	Copy of resolution passed at a general meeting of Indian Journalists' Association, [Calcutta]	File No. 158, Jayaprakash Narayan Papers, NMML 607

A. ii December

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Pg No.</i>
1.	24.12.46	Victimisation of Jalgaon Girni Kamgar Union Leaders	Resolution adopted by Working Council, Bombay Trade Union Congress, Bombay	File No. 72, AITUC Papers, NMML 608
2.	28.12.46	Military Accounts Union Complains of Victimization	Extracts from a letter by the Secretary, Military Accounts Union, Kanpur, to Jayaprakash Narayan, Kanpur	File No. 162, Jayaprakash Narayan Papers, NMML 609
3.	31.12.46	Vallabhbhai Patel on Industrial Strikes	Extracts from a news report, 'Internal strife bars freedom.'	<i>Hindustan Times</i> 609
4.	-12.46	Inter Union Rivalry in Madurai, Tamil Nadu	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Madras province for the second half of December 1946.	Fortnightly Reports, Public (General) Government of Madras, TNSA 610

3.A.xiii Miscellaneous

[Many undated documents are kept on file in the various collections at the archives. Such documents as have been selected by us have a relevance to our volume, and would otherwise have been included with the rest of the papers, had they been dated. Wherever possible dates have been estimated. The very last document in this section is from the year 1947, but selected extracts appertain to 1946.—Ed.]

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Pg No.</i>
1.	—	Giridih Colliers' Strike and May Day Celebrations	Handwritten draft copy of a press communiqué by the Communist Party of India, Giridih, undated [May 1946]	File No.55, AITUC Papers, NMML. 610
2	—	AITUC and the Freedom Struggle	Extracts from copy of a letter by Manek Gandhi Assistant Secretary, AITUC, Bombay, to Harry Smith, 7 Crescent Road, Rowley Park, Stafford, U.K. The copy of the letter is undated, but possibly May/June 1946	File No.35, AITUC Papers, NMML. 611
3.	—	AITUC Refutes Vallabhbhai Patel's Remarks	Undated statement by Mrinal Kanti Bose, President, AITUC	File No.9, AITUC Papers, 1946 NMML. 612
4.	—	Bombay Provincial TUC Blames Police for Amalner Firing	undated and unsigned office note prepared from an enquiry report conducted by Dinkar Desai, General Secretary, Bombay Provincial Trade Union Congress	File No. 72, AITUC Papers, NMML. 613
5	—	M.K. Bose' Communal Riots and the Duty of Workers	Statement by Mrinal Kanti Bose, President, AITUC, undated copy, but possibly November 1946	File No.72, AITUC Papers, NMML. 614
6.	—	M.K. Bose Urges and Enquiry into Amalner Firing	Statement by Mrinal Kanti Bose, President, AITUC, undated copy, but possibly end of September 1946.	File No.11, AITUC Papers, NMML. 615
7.	21.4.47	Eighth Labour Conference	Extracts from Report on Labour Policy and Administration during 1946-47, presented by GOI at the Eighth Labour Conference held at New Delhi on 21 April 1947 under the aegis of the Department of Labour, and presided over by Jagjiwan Ram.	File No. 572, Jayaprakash Narayan Papers, NMML. 615

3.B Peasants**3.B.i General**

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Pg No</i>
1.	11.1.46	Congress and the Kisan Sabhas	Extracts from a letter by Swami Sahajanand Saraswati to Jawaharlal Nehru, Biheta	Microfilm Roll No. 5, Swami Sahajanand Saraswati Papers, NMML 621

3.B.ii Bengal

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Pg No</i>
1.	-5.46	Midnapore Tenants Stop Payment of Rents	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Bengal for the second half of May 1946.	File No. 18/5/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 622
2.	15.12.46	Bengal Kisan Sabha Conference	Extracts from a report Bengal Kisan Sabha Conference: Proceedings and Resolutions.	<i>People's Age</i> 622
3.	15.12.46	Bengal Sharecroppers' Tebhaga Uprising	Article, 'Bengal sharecroppers' resist new onslaught of zamindars.'	<i>People's Age</i> 624
4.	16.12.46	League Ministry Blamed for Police Zulum Against Sharecroppers	News report, 'Hindus and Muslims both are victims.'	<i>Free Press Journal</i> 627
5.	-	Somnath Hore's Diary	An eyewitness account of the Tebhaga movement.	Somnath Hore, <i>Tebhaga: An Artist's Diary and Sketchbook</i> , (trans. S. Zutshi., Calcutta, 1990) 628
6.	22.12.46	The Battle for Tebhaga in Mymensingh	News report, Sharecroppers battle for new harvest.' By wire from Nikhil Chakravarty.	<i>People's Age</i> 628
7.	22.12.46	Bengal Press and the Tebhaga Movement	Article, 'The Bengal Press and Tebhaga movement.	<i>People's Age</i> 630
8.	-	Somnath Hore's Diary	An eyewitness account of the Tebhaga movement.	Somnath Hore, <i>Tebhaga: An Artist's Diary and Sketchbook</i> , (trans. S. Zutshi., Calcutta, 1990). 632
9.	29.12.46	Tenancy Bill in Bengal Assembly	News report, 'Bengal kisans wage their biggest struggle.' By Nikhil Chakravarty.	<i>People's Age</i> 632

3.B.iii Madras Province

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Pg No</i>
1.	-6.46	Mylavaram Hindu Mahasabha at Odds with Communists and League	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Madras province for the first half of June 1946	File No. 18/6/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 635
2.	18.8.46	Kisans of Tanjore Unhappy with Ministry	Article, 'Tanjore kisans take possession of mirasdars' lands.	<i>People's Age</i> 635
3.	15.9.46	Ramnad Kisans Fight for a Better Deal	Article, 'Landlords let 10,000 acres of wet land lie fallow.'	<i>People's Age</i> 637
4.	7.10.46	Communist Activities in Ramnad	Memorandum submitted on behalf of the Landowners' Association, Watrap, Ramnad, to the P.M., Government of Madras, Madras	File No. 2472, Public (General) Government of Madras, TNSA 639
5.	8.10.46	Agrarian Troubles in Watrap	Letter by A.Srinivasacharair, a pleader from Watrap, Ramnad, to S.V. Ramamurthy, Chief Secretary, Government of Madras, Srivilliputtur	File No. 2472, Public (General), Government of Madras, TNSA 641
6.	- 11 46	Tanjore Rvots Claim Larger Share of Harvest	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Madras Province for the first half of November 1946.	Fortnightly Reports, Public, Public (General), Govt. of Madras, TNSA 642
7.	24.12.46	Watrap Landowners and Tenants Effect Compromise	Report by Deputy Superintendent of Police, Ramnad, to the Inspector General of Police, Madras	File No. 2472, Public (General), Government of Madras, TNSA 643
8.	29.12.46	Chirakkal (Malabar) Kisans Prevent Removal of Paddy	Article, 'Malabar Special Police to aid landlords.' By E.M.S. Namboodripad	<i>People's Age</i> 644
9.	-12.46	Communist Activities in Malabar and Tanjore	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Madras Province for the second half of December 1946	Fortnightly Reports, Public (General), Government of Madras, TNSA 645

3.B.iv Bombay Province

<i>S No</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Pg No.</i>
1	-10.46	Discontent Among Warlis of Thana	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Bombay Province for the second half of September 1946	File No. 18/9/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 646

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>		<i>Pg No.</i>
2.	27.10.46	Warli Militancy	Article, '15,000 Warli kisans on strike'.	<i>People's Age</i>	646
3.	24.11.46	Warli Win Their Terms	Article, 'Warli kisans' glorious victory.'	<i>People's Age</i>	649
4.	8.12.46	Emergency Declared in Warli Areas	Extracts from an article, 'Police whip cracks again over Warli kisans.'	<i>People's Age</i>	651

3.B.v Bihar

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>		<i>Pg No.</i>
1.	-.7.46	Peasants' Forcibly Take Possession of Land in Patna Division	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Bihar for the second half of July 1946.	File No. 18/7/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI	652
2.	6.10.46	Tussle Over <i>Bakasht</i> Lands in Bihar	Article, 'Bihar kisans in revolt.' By Indradip Sinha.	<i>People's Age</i>	652

3.B.vi United Provinces

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>		<i>Pg No.</i>
1.	26.7.46	Tensions Over Possession of Land in Lucknow District	Extract from Weekly Report No. 29	Weekly Reports, CID Records, Government of the United Provinces, UPSA	655
2.	8.9.46	Kisan Sabha Activities in the United Provinces	Article, 'U.P. Kisans wage unprecedented battles.'	<i>People's Age</i>	655
3.	20.9.46	Zamindars Fight the Abolition of Their Order	Extract from Weekly Report No. 37	Weekly Reports, CID Records, Government of the United Provinces, UPSA	662
4.	23.9.46	Tensions in Basti	News report, 'Peasants gather crop without permission.'	<i>Hindustan Times</i>	662
5.	29.9.46	Zamindars Mobilize Support for Their Cause	Article, 'U.P. Kisans fight back landlord offensive.'	<i>People's Age</i>	663

3.B.vii Punjab

<i>No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>		<i>Pg No.</i>
1.	4.8.46	Punjab Kisans Demand More Water for Irrigation	Extracts from an article, 'Punjab kisans launch first postwar battle.'	<i>People's Age</i>	665
2.	18.8.46	Kisans of All Communities Join Hands in Punjab Morcha	Extracts from an article, 'All kisans, Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs behind Punjab morcha.'	<i>People's Age</i>	665

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>		<i>Pg No.</i>
3.	25.8.46	Jat Unionists of East Punjab Turn to Congress	Extracts from an article, 'Kisan battles in Punjab.'	<i>People's Age</i>	666
4.	6.10.46	Irrigation Department Gives in to Kisans' Demand for More Water	Extracts from an article, 'Punjab kisan morcha won but ministry refuses to release 700 prisoners.'	<i>People's Age</i>	666
5	6.10.46	Punjab's Muslim Peasantry Revolts Against League Landlords	Extracts from an article, 'Punjab Muslim peasants raise banner of revolt.'	<i>People's Age</i>	667

4. Communalism

INTRODUCTION

4.1 Bengal

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>		<i>Pg No.</i>
1.	-5.46	Touchy Communal Situation in Dhaka	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Bengal for the first half of May 1946	File No. 18/5/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI	671
2	5.46	Burdwan and Jessore Incidents	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Bengal for the second half of May 1946	File No. 18/5/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI	671
3	7.46	Riots Break Out in Dhaka	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Bengal for the first half of July 1946	File No. 18/7/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI	672
4.	-7.46	Bengal Quiet but Tense	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Bengal for the second half of July 1946	File No. 18/7/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI	673
5	18.8.46	Calcutta Erupts After Direct Action Day	Extracts from a news report, Calcutta riots death-roll mounts.'	<i>Hindustan Times</i>	673
6	19.8.46	Hindu Women and Children Evacuated from North Calcutta	Extracts from a news report, 'Death and desolation everywhere.'	<i>Hindustan Times</i>	674
7	19.8.46	Peace March by Hindus and Muslims in Calcutta	News report, 'peace procession parades streets.'	<i>Hindustan Times</i>	674
8	19.8.46	Congress-League Joint Appeal for Peace	Extracts from a news report, Congress-League joint appeal for peace.'	<i>Hindustan Times</i>	674
9.	24.8.46	AIHMS, Ajmer, Asks for Trial of Bengal Ministry	Statement by Kanwar Chand Karan Sarda, General Secretary, AIHMS, Ajmer, Ajmer,	File No. C-117, AIHMS Papers, NMML	675

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Pg No.</i>
10.	25.8.46	Calcutta Massacre	Article, 'Calcutta in grip of insane lust for fratricidal blood,' by Nikhil Chakravarty	<i>People's Age</i> 676
11.	25.8.46	Views of Muslim Congress Workers on Causes of Communalism	Extracts from a letter by Golam Kader Choudhury, a Congress worker, to Jawaharlal Nehru, Dacca	File No. P-5, AICC Papers, NMML 681
12.	26.8.46	League Ministry Blamed for Inaction	Extracts from news report, League leaders responsible for Calcutta' carnage.	<i>Hindustan Times</i> 682
13.	1.9.46	Heroic Harmony Efforts	News report, 'workers' and common man's heroism against fratricidal war.'	<i>People's Age</i> 683
14.	1.9.46	The Blame for the Spread of Communalism	Article, 'Communal war an imperialist conspiracy against Indian freedom.'	<i>People's Age</i> 685
15.	15.9.46	Direct Action Day in Bengal	Extracts from Paragraphs for Monthly Summary for the Cabinet	File No. 5/12/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 690
16.	15.9.46	Instances of Communal Harmony During Riots in Calcutta	Article, 'Those who fought to save brothers,' by Nikhil Chakravarty	<i>People's Age</i> 691
17.	15.9.46	Leaguers Attack Communists in Chittagong	Extracts from a news report, Direct Action destroys Hindu-Muslim unity.'	<i>People's Age</i> 694
18.	15.9.46	Trouble Continues in East Bengal	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Bengal for the first half of September 1946.	File No. 18/9/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 695
19.	19.9.46	Motion of No Confidence in Muslim League in Bengal Assembly	Extracts from Assembly proceedings	Official Report, Bengal Legislative Assembly (Second session 1946), Volume 71, No. 3, Appendix L 696
20.	19.9.46	Communists Abstain in Congress No Confidence Motion in Bengal Assembly	Extracts from Assembly proceedings	Official Report, Bengal Legislative Assembly (Second session 1946), Volume 71, No. 3, Appendix M 697
21.	28.9.46	Police Blamed for Inaction During Riots	Extracts from Assembly proceedings	Official Report, Bengal Legislative Assembly (Second session 1946), Volume 71, No. 3, Appendix N 698

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Pg No.</i>
22.	2.9.46	Recrudescence of Communal Trouble in Calcutta and Dhaka	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Bengal for the second half of September 1946.	File No. 18/9/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 699
23.	1.10.46	Calcutta Transport Workers Demand Police Protection	Extracts from a news report, 'Armed guards demanded.'	<i>Hindustan Times</i> 700
24.	6.10.46	'Business is Business.'	Extracts from a featured column, 'A patriot's notebook.' By Romesh Chandra	<i>People's Age</i> 700
25.	8.10.46	Second Round of Disturbances in Calcutta	Letter by Kalipada Mukherji, Secretary, Bengal Provincial Congress Committee, to the General Secretary AICC, Allahabad, Calcutta	File No. G-53, AICC Papers, NMML 701
26.	13.10.46	Direct Action Day in East Bengal	Article, 'Grim Spell of fratricidal hatred.'	<i>People's Age</i> 703
27.	15.10.46	Riots Break Out in Noakhali	Extracts from a news report, 'Many persons burnt alive: Governor's intervention urged.'	<i>Hindustan Times</i> 706
28.	16.10.46	Refugees Leave Noakhali in Large Numbers	Extracts from a telegram by the Governor of Bengal to the Viceroy	File No. 5/55/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 706
29.	18.10.46	Noakhali Riots Worse than Calcutta's	Letter by Sudhir Ghose, Assistant Secretary, Bengal Provincial Congress Committee (forwarding a report by Kalipada Mukherji, Secretary, Bengal Provincial Congress Committee) to the General Secretary, AICC, Allahabad, Calcutta	File No. G-53, AICC Papers, NMML. 707
30.	17.10.46	Disturbances in Southeast Bengal Not as Bad as Reported, Says Governor	Extracts from a telegram by the Governor of Bengal to the Secretary to the G-G, Public Department, GOI	File No. 5/55/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 710
31.	18.10.46	Riots Move Northwards from Noakhali	Extracts from a news report, '5000 killed in Noakhali and Tipperah.'	<i>Hindustan Times</i> 711
32.	20.10.46	Governor and Chief Minister Survey the Afflicted Area by Air	Extracts from a telegram by the Governor, to the Viceroy	File No. 5/55/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 711
33.	27.10.46	Communist Party Efforts Against Communalism	Article, 'Communist intervention.'	<i>People's Age</i> 712

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Pg No</i>
34.	27.10.46	Causes for the Noakhali Rampage	Article, 'Hell fire in Noakhali.'	<i>People's Age</i> 712
35.	29.10.46	Calcutta Flares Up Again	Extracts from a news report, 'Calcutta situation worsens.'	<i>Hindustan Times</i> 715
36.	31.10.46	Congress President Tours Noakhali	Report of a tour of Dattapatra and Khilpara, Noakhali by Sucheta Kripalani, Dhiren Datta, and Acharya Kripalani.	File No. P-5, AICC Papers, NMML 716
37.	–	East Bengal Disturbances Reported in British Parliament	Statement by the Secretary of State in the House of Commons, London, undated document, estimated October/November 1946.	File No. 5/46/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 718
38.	3.11.46	Hasanabad Kisan Sabha Keeps Villages Free of Communal Violence	Article, 'Red Hasanabad—impenetrable steel wall against Noakhali's hell.'	<i>People's Age</i> 719
39.	3.11.46	Kisan Sabha Worker's Account of Noakhali	Article, 'Out of Noakhali's forbidden zone.'	<i>People's Age</i> 720
40.	6.11.46	M.K. Gandhi Calls Bengal Riots a Discharge	Extracts from a speech by M.K. Gandhi at Goadburda, Bihar, on his way to Noakhali	M.K. Gandhi, <i>Collected Works</i> , Vol. LXXXVI, New Delhi, 1982, p. 86 722
41.	7.11.46	Roots and Remedies of Communalism in Bengal	A circular letter by Nalinaksha Sanyal, a Congress activist of Bengal, Calcutta	File No. G-53, A.I.C.C. Papers, NMML 723
42.	7.11.46	Ramakrishna Mission's Work in the Riot Torn Areas	Extracts from a letter by Sambuddhananday of the Ramakrishna Mission, Bombay, to M.R. Jayakar, Bombay	File No. 672, M.R. Jayakar Papers, NAI 726
43.	10.11.46	Bengal League Secretary's Call for Peace	Article, 'Stop this suicidal game.'	<i>People's Age</i> 727
44.	10.11.46	Hindu-Muslim Amity in Hasanabad	Report, 'Immortal Hasanabad—hope of Bengal.'	<i>People's Age</i> 727
45.	10.11.46	M.K. Gandhi in Noakhali	Extracts from news report, 'Muslim crowds attend prayer meeting.'	<i>Hindustan Times</i> 729
46.	10.11.46	M.K. Gandhi, a Servant of Both Communities	Extracts from a speech by M.K. Gandhi at a Dattapara, Noakhali, prayer meeting	M.K. Gandhi, <i>Collected Works</i> , Vol. LXXXVI, New Delhi, 1982, p. 107 729

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Pg No.</i>
47.	13.11.46	Satyagraha in Noakhali for the Safety of Hindus	Extracts from a report of a discussion between M.K. Gandhi and his coworkers at Dattapara, Noakhali	M.K. Gandhi, <i>Collected Works</i> , Vol. LXXXVI, New Delhi, 1982, p. 114. 729
48.	14.11.46	M.K. Gandhi Offers Solace to Women Victims	News report, Gandhiji visits Bengal villages.'	<i>Free Press Journal</i> 730
49.	15.11.46	Statistics for October Communal Crimes in Calcutta and Dhaka	Extracts from Paragraphs for Monthly Summary for the Cabinet	File No. 5/12/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 730
50.	17.11.46	An Obituary for Lalmohan Sen	Editorial, 'Lalmohan Sen.'	<i>People's Age</i> 731
51.	17.11.46	A Muslim Kisan Sabha Organiser Tours Noakhali	Article, 'The story of our disgrace.'	<i>People's Age</i> 732
52.	18.11.46	A Victim's Account of the Riots.	Extracts from a letter by Mohendra Mohan Roy (a victim of the Noakhali riots) to the District Magistrate, Noakhali, Calcutta	File No. G-65, AICC Papers, NMML 733
53.	18.11.46	Governor of Bengal's Review of Noakhali	Extracts from a report by the Governor of Bengal, to the Home Department, GOI	File No. 5/55/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 735
54.	19.11.46	Central Government's Nonintervention in Bengal Questioned	Extracts from a debate in Council of State during Supplementary Questions to Question No. 97 by Surput Singh	File No. 8/22/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 738
55.	24.11.46	Congress MIA Impressed with Hasanabad's Communal Unity	Extracts from an article, 'Oasis.'	<i>People's Age</i> 739
56.	15.12.46	A Critique of the Reporting of Riot News in Bengal Press	Article, 'Riot news in Bengal press.'	<i>People's Age</i> 740
	22.12.46	Released Chittagong Armoury Raiders Work for Communal Harmony	Article, 'Bengal's revolutionary heroes battle for peace.' By Nikhil Chakravarty	<i>People's Age</i> 741
58.	22.12.46	Both Communities Visit M.K. Gandhi in Noakhali	Extracts from <i>Hindustan Standard</i> , describing M.K. Gandhi's stay with N.K. Bose at Srirampur, Noakhali, quoted in: Pyarelal, <i>Mahatma Gandhi: The Last Phase</i> .	Pyarelal, <i>Mahatma Gandhi: The Last Phase</i> , Vol. I, Ahmedabad, 1956, p. 395. 743

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Pg No.</i>
59.		Paddy Begun to be Harvested in Chandpur and Noakhali	Extracts from a printed report of the situation in Noakhali and Chandpur by Sanat Kumar Roy Choudhury and Makhan Lal Biswas of the Bengal Provincial Hindu Mahasabha, undated	File No. C-132, AIHMS Papers, NMML 743
60.	14.1.47	Heavy Influx of Refugees from Bihar Causes Tensions	Extracts from Paragraphs for Monthly Summary for the Cabinet	File No. 5/12/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 744

4.ii Bihar

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Pg No</i>
1.	-6.46	Newspapers Blamed for Worsening Situation in Bihar	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Bihar for the Second half of June 1946	File No. 18/6/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 745
2.	-6.46	Muslim League's Belligerence Worries Nationalist Muslims	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Bihar for the Second half of June 1946	File No. 18/6/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 745
3.	-9.46	Rumours Lead to Killings and Arson in Muzaffarpur	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Bihar for the Second half of September 1946	File No. 18/9/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 746
4.	26.10.46	Hartal in Chapra Saran Against Noakhali Events Leads to Riots	Telegram from 'Bihar, Ranchi' [??], to 'Home in, New Delhi' [Intelligence Bureau, Home Department, GOI], Ranchi	File No. 5/52/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 746
5.	4.11.46	Bihar Government Admits Riots Caught it Unprepared	Extracts from a news report, 'Nearly four hundred killed in Bihar.'	<i>Free Press Journal</i> 747
6.	5.11.46	300 Reported Killed in One Village in South Monghyr	Extracts from a telegram by the Governor's Secretary, Bihar, to the Secretary to G-G, Public Department, GOI	File No. 5/52/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 748
7.	6.11.46	Troops Help Contain Trouble in Bihar	Extracts from a news report, 'Situation in Bihar still serious.'	<i>Free Press Journal</i> 748
8.	9.11.46	Hindus of Patna District Protest Against Military Firing	Bihar Governor's telegram to Viceroy	File No. 5/52/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 749
9.	10.11.46	Police Fails to Control Situation in Bihar	News report, 'Bihar follows Noakhali.' By Indradip Sinha	<i>People's Age</i> 749

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Pg No</i>
10.	12.11.46	Ban on the Wearing of Uniforms by Private Volunteer Organisations	Bihar Governor's telegram to the Viceroy	File No. 5/52/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 751
11.	16.11.46	Pre-censorship of the Press	Extracts from telegram by Bihar Governor's Secretary to the Private Secretary, Viceroy	File No. 5/52/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 752
12.	17.11.46	Casualties Inflicted in Suppression of Riots in North Bihar	Extracts from Joint Operations and Intelligence Room Report No. G4	File No. 5/52/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 752
13.	17.11.46	Jawaharlal Nehru Moved to Tears by Refugees' Plight	Article, 'Who set Bihar alight?'	<i>People's Age</i> 752
14.	24.11.46	Bihar's Fight Against Communal Frenzy	Article, 'Bihar fights riots.' By Indradip Sinha	<i>People's Age</i> 754
15.	24.11.46	How the Riots Spread, According to the Communist Party	Extracts from an article, 'Punish the devils.'	<i>People's Age</i> 757
16.	24.11.46	Communist Criticism of League and Congress Reportage on Bihar	Article, 'League Press on Bihar.'	<i>People's Age</i> 759
17.	22.12.46	Behind the Slogan 'Transfer of Population'	Article, 'Bihar belongs to Hindus, Muslims both.' By Sunil Mukherji.	<i>People's Age</i> 761

4.iii Bombay

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Pg No.</i>
1	2.7.46	M.K. Gandhi Deeply Saddened by Communal Riots in Ahmedabad	Extracts from a news report, 'Sacrifice yourself and end the rioting.'	<i>Free Press Journal</i> 765
2	13.7.46	A <i>Rath Yatra</i> Leads to Riots in Ahmedabad	Report by Deputy Superintendent of Police to District Magistrate, Ahmedabad, Ahmedabad	File No. 5/26/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 766
3	-7.46	Ahmedabad Under Curfew	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Bombay Province for the first half of July 1946	File No. 18/7/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 767
4	21.7.46	Ahmedabad Riots Caused by Dissemination of Hate Politics	Extracts from a news report, 'The Ahmedabad riots.'	<i>People's Age</i> 768

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Pg No.</i>
5.	2.9.46	Emergency Declared in Bombay	Extracts from a news report, '47 killed in Bombay riots.'	<i>Hindustan Times</i> 769
6.	8.9.46	Muslims Remonstrate in Bombay at Formation of Interim Government	Article, 'Communal riot bursts out in Bombay.'	<i>People's Age</i> 769
7.	15.9.46	Anti-riot Efforts in Bombay	Article, 'Red flag fights against fratricidal war.'	<i>People's Age</i> 772
8.	21.9.46	Workers Keep Aloof from Riots	Extracts from a resolution passed by the Working Council, Bombay Provincial Trade Union Congress	File No. 72, AITUC Papers, NMML 775
9.	22.9.46	Deeds of Heroism and Unity in the Carnage of Riots	Article, 'Deeds of heroism and brotherly unity.' by P.B. Rangnekar.	<i>People's Age</i> 775
10.	26.10.46	Police Open Fire on Nizampur, Kolaba, Rioters	Extracts from a telegram by Governor's Secretary, Bombay, to the G-G's Secretary, GOI	File No. 5/49/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 777
11.	26.10.46	Boycott of Muslims of Nizampur	Extracts from a report by T.T. Kothawala, District Magistrate, Kolaba, to the Secretary to the Government, Home Department, Bombay, Camp Mangaon	File No. 5/49/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 778
12.	17.11.46	Student Squads for Communal Peace	Extracts from a letter by Dinkar Sakrikar, General Secretary, All India Students' Congress, to Mridula Sarabhai., Bombay	File No. 22, AITUC Papers, NMML 778
13.	6.12.46	Buckshot Used During Taboot Procession in Dabhel, Ratnagiri	Extracts from a report by V.B. Deshpande, Sub divisional Magistrate, Camp Dabhel, to District Magistrate, Ratnagiri., Camp Dabhel	File No. 5/49/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 779

I.iv United Provinces

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Pg No.</i>
1.	13.3.46	Communal Riots During Assembly Polls in Kanpur	Extracts from a news report, 'Police fire twice on Cawnpore mobs.'	<i>Statesman</i> 780

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Pg No.</i>
2.	-3.46	Deterioration of Communal Relations in the United Provinces	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for the United Provinces for the second half of March 1946.	File No. 18/3/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 780
3	- 4.46	Hindus and Muslims Arming Themselves in Agra	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for the United Provinces for the first half of April 1946	File No. 18/4/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 781
4.	2.5.46	Government Has No Policy to Deal with Communal Disturbances	Extracts from a news report, 'Students and city Muslims responsible for arson.'	<i>Hindustan Times</i> 781
5.	30.5.46	Riots in Bareilly	Extracts from a telegram by the Home Department, Government of the United Provinces, to the Home Department, GOI, Naini Tal	File No. 5/24/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 782
6	30.5.46	Labour cum Communal Trouble at Chheoki Ordnance Depot	Telegram by the Home Department, Government of the United Provinces, to the Home Department, GOI, Naini Tal	File No. 5/25/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 782
7	-5.46	A Tendency for Labour Disputes to Become Communal Disputes in the United Provinces	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for the United Provinces for the second half of May 1946	File No. 18/5/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 782
8.	-5.46	Petty Incidents with No Communal Basis Develop into Serious Clashes	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for the United Provinces for the first half of June 1946	File No. 18/6/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 783
9.	-6.46	Rashtriya Swayamsewak Sangh Comes to Prominent Notice	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for the United Provinces for the first half of June 1946	File No. 18/6/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 783
10.	5.7.46	Sangh <i>Pracharaks</i> Undergo Training at Hathras	Extracts from Weekly Report No. 27	Weekly Reports, CID Records, Government of the United Provinces, UPSA 784
11.	- 6.46	Sangh and League National Guards Intensify Their Activities	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for the United Provinces for the second half of June 1946	File No. 18/6/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 784
12.	26.7.46	New Sangh Shakas in the United Provinces	Extracts from Weekly Report No. 29	Weekly Reports, CID Records, Government of the United Provinces, UPSA 785

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>		<i>Pg No.</i>
13.	16.8.46	Mahasabha Meeting at Gonda Asserts Communal Separatism	Extracts from Weekly Report No. 32	Weekly Reports, CID Records, Government of the United Provinces, UPSA	785
14.	16.8.46	Direct Action Day in the United Provinces	Extracts from Weekly Report No. 32	Weekly Reports, CID Records, Government of the United Provinces, UPSA	785
15.	16.8.46	Nationalist Muslims of Azamgarh Keep Shops Open on Direct Action Day	Extracts from Weekly Report No. 32	Weekly Reports, CID Records, Government of the United Provinces, UPSA	785
16.	23.8.46	Strident Speeches by League Students at Aligarh	Extracts from Weekly Report No. 33	Weekly Reports, CID Records, Government of the United Provinces, UPSA	786
17.	23.8.46	Farrukhabad Muslims Asked to Prepare for Revolt	Extracts from Weekly Report No. 33	Weekly Reports, CID Records, Government of the United Provinces, UPSA	786
18.	24.8.46	Police Fire Open at Four Places in Allahabad	Extracts from a news report, '4 killed and 43 injured at Allahabad.'	<i>Hindustan Times</i>	786
19.	20.9.46	League Imparts Lathi Training to Aligarh Muslims	Extracts from Weekly Report No. 37	Weekly Reports, CID Records, Government of the United Provinces, UPSA	786
20.	27.8.46	Paramilitary Training for Muslim National Guard	Extracts from Weekly Report No. 38	Weekly Reports, CID Records, Government of the United Provinces, UPSA	787
21.	27.9.46	The Stoning of an Agra Ramlila Procession Turns into a Riot	Extracts from Weekly Report No. 38	Weekly Reports, CID Records, Government of the United Provinces, UPSA	787
22.	27.9.46	Labour Unrest and the League in Kanpur	Extracts from Weekly Report No. 38	Weekly Reports, CID Records, Government of the United Provinces, UPSA	787

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<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>		<i>Pg No.</i>
23.	27.9.46	Agra Under Twenty-four Hour Curfew	Extracts from a telegram by U.P.A.O. [??] to Intelligence Bureau, Home Department, GOI, Lucknow	File No. 5/50/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI	788
24.	11.10.46	Raja Mahendra Pratap Singh Willing to Give Daughter in Marriage to a Muslim	Extracts from Weekly Report No. 39	Weekly Reports, CID Records, Government of the United Provinces, UPSA	788
25	25.10.46	League Consolidates Position with the Scheduled Castes	Extracts from Weekly Report No. 41	Weekly Reports, CID Records, Government of the United Provinces, UPSA	788
26.	-	Hindu Mahasabha Report on Agra Riots	Statement made by V.G. Deshpande, Honorary Secretary, AIHMS, undated, probably October 1946	File No. C-100, AIHMS Papers, NMML	788
27.	1.11.46	Rumours of Kidnapping in Lucknow Result in Communal Assaults	Extracts from Weekly Report No. 42	Weekly Reports, CID Records, Government of the United Provinces, UPSA	790
28.	1.11.46	Hindu Sabha Condemns Interim Government at Bareilly Meeting	Extracts from Weekly Report No. 42	Weekly Reports, CID Records, Government of the United Provinces, UPSA	790
29.	1.11.46	Kanpur Scheduled Castes Do Not Observe Noakhali Day	Extracts from Weekly Report No. 42	Weekly Reports, CID Records, Government of the United Provinces, UPSA	790
30.	1.11.46	Mud Slung at Raja Mahendra Pratap Singh by Arya Samajists	Extracts from Weekly Report No. 42	Weekly Reports, CID Records, Government of the United Provinces, UPSA	791
31.	1.11.46	A Train Stopped at Allahabad and Passengers Beaten up	Extracts from Weekly Report No. 42	Weekly Reports, CID Records, Government of the United Provinces, UPSA	791
32.	6.11.46	Communal Situation in Gorakhpur District Over <i>Bakr Id</i>	Extract from a letter by R.V. Vernede, District Magistrate, Gorakhpur, to Rajeshwar Dayal, Home	File No. 5/50/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI	791

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>		<i>Pg No.</i>
			Secretary, Government of the United Provinces, Gorakhpur		
33.	8.11.46	Hindu Organisations Open Temples to Scheduled Castes	Extracts from Weekly Report No. 43	Weekly Reports, CID Records, Government of the United Provinces, UPSA	793
34.	8.11.46	Riots at Garhmukteshwar Fair	Extracts from a news report, '46 dead, 39 injured.'	<i>Hindustan Times</i>	793
35.	8.11.46	Garhmukteshwar Trouble Spreads to the Whole District	Extracts from Weekly Report No. 43	Weekly Reports, CID Records, Government of the United Provinces, UPSA	794
36.	8.11.46	Casualties Feared Heavy at Garhmukteshwar Fair	Extracts from a telegram by Governor's Secretary, United Provinces, to the Viceroy's Private Secretary	File No. 5/50/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI	794
37.	9.11.46	250 Killed in Garhmukteshwar Town	Extracts from a telegram by Governor's Secretary, United Provinces, to the Viceroy's Private Secretary	File No. 5/50/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI	794
38.	10.11.46	Garhmukteshwar Pilgrims' Train Attacked en Route to Delhi	Extracts from a news report, 'Attack on train near Meerut.'	<i>Hindustan Times</i>	794
39.	11.11.46	Villagers of Shahjahanpur Retaliate	Extracts from a telegram by Governor's Secretary, United Provinces, to the Viceroy's Private Secretary	File No. 5/50/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI	795
40.	11.11.46	83 Killed in Shajahanpur	Extracts from a telegram by Governor's Secretary, United Provinces, to the G-G, Public Department, GOI	File No. 5/50/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI	795
41.	12.11.46	Meerut District Tense and Seriously Disturbed	Telegram by Governor's Secretary, United Provinces, to the G-G, Public Department, GOI	File No. 5/50/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI	795
42.	14.11.46	The Mayhem of Meerut District Begins to Abate	Telegram by Governor's Secretary, United Provinces, to the G-G, Public Department, GOI	File No. 5/50/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI	795
43.	22.12.46	Aspects of Garhmukteshwar Riots	Article, 'What happened at Garhmukteshwar.' By O.P. Singal	<i>People's Age</i>	796

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<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>		<i>Pg No.</i>
44.	15.11.46	Arya Samajists Condole Madan Mohan Malaviya's Demise	Extracts from Weekly Report No. 44	Weekly Reports, CID Records, Government of the United Provinces, UPSA	799
45	15.11.46	Sangh Activities in the United Provinces	Extracts from Weekly Report No. 44	Weekly Reports, CID Records, Government of the United Provinces, UPSA	799
46.	15.11.46	League Raises Funds for Bihar and Meerut Muslims	Extracts from Weekly Report No. 44	Weekly Reports, CID Records, Government of the United Provinces, UPSA	800
47.	6.12.46	Aligarh Muslim University Students Receive Lathi Training	Extracts from Weekly Report No. 47	Weekly Reports, CID Records, Government of the United Provinces, UPSA	800
48	8.12.46	Workers' Efforts to Block Riots in Kanpur	Extracts from an article, 'Red flag saves Cawnpore.	<i>People's Age</i>	800
49.	13.12.46	Hindu Volunteer Groups Undergo Martial Training	Extracts from Weekly Report No. 48	Weekly Reports, CID Records, Government of the United Provinces, UPSA	802
50.	13.12.46	Raja of Jaunpur Doing Propaganda for Rashtriya Swayamsewak Sangh	Extracts from Weekly Report No. 48	Weekly Reports, CID Records, Government of the United Provinces, UPSA	803
51	13.12.46	Muslim League Criticizes Gwalior Durbar	Extracts from Weekly Report No. 48	Weekly Reports, CID Records, Government of the United Provinces, UPSA	803
52.	13.12.46	Moradabad Ahrars Critical of League and Sangh	Extracts from Weekly Report No. 48,	Weekly Reports, CID Records, Government of the United Provinces, UPSA	803
53.	13.12.46	The Story of a Raperication in Noakhali	A translation of an alleged autobiographical account of Amiyabala of Noakhali published in the United Provinces by the Hindi magazine <i>Kalyan</i> of October 1946, and reprinted in <i>Mahratta</i> , a	File No. 1116/1947, Series No. 1-40, Home (Police) Department, Government of the United Provinces, UPSA	803

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Pg No.</i>
			Pune newspaper. The title of the piece: 'A Heart Touching Appeal of a Daughter of Bengal'. The UP government considered the piece objectionable. Extracts.	
54.	15.12.46	Hapur Riots in the Wake of the Garhmukteshwar Disturbances	Wireless message, from Deputy Inspector of Police, Western Range, to the Inspector General of Police, Lucknow.	File No. 5/50/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 804
55.	16.12.46	Hapur Placed Under Twenty-four Hour Curfew	Extracts from wireless message, from Deputy Inspector of Police, Western Range, to the Inspector General of Police, Lucknow.	File No. 5/50/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 805
56.	21.12.46	Meerut Hindu Relief Committee's Review of Hapur Disturbances	Extracts from a report by Meerut Hindu Relief Committee, Hindu Sabha, and Prakashwati Sood, MLA (UP)	File No. CL 10, AICC Papers, NMML 805
57.	23.12.46	Hindus of Hapur Face Large Collective Fine	Extracts from a telegram by Amolakchand Mile, Secretary, Hapur Congress Committee, to Acharya Kriplani, President, Indian National Congress, Hapur	File No. CL 10, AICC Papers, NMML 806
58.	-	Hapur Hindus Protest Against the Collective Fine	Extracts from a memorandum by the Hindus of Hapur, to the Government of the United Provinces, undated, probably December 1946/January 1947	File No. CL 10, AICC Papers, NMML 806
59.	23.1.47	The United Provinces Provincial Congress Committee Report on Hapur Riots	Extracts from a report by Phool Singh, M.L.A., Secretary, United Provinces Congress Committee	File No. CL 10, AICC Papers, NMML 807

4.v Delhi

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Pg No.</i>
1.	18.4.46	Delhi Police Get Ready for Communal Trouble	A note dated 18 April 1946 prepared by W.N.P. Jenkins, Deputy Director, Intelligence Bureau, Home Department, GOI	File No. 5/6/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 809

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<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>		<i>Pg No.</i>
2.	15.5.46	A Sudden Communal Riot Occurs in Delhi Over a Minor Incident	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Delhi for the first half of May 1946	File No. 18/5/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI	809
3.	21.5.46	The Start of the Riot	Extracts from a letter by W. Christie, Chief Commissioner, Delhi, to A.E. Porter, Secretary, Home Department, GOI	File No. 5/6/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI	810
4.	21.5.46	Local Residents' Version of the Riots	Extracts from a letter from some residents of Circular Road, New Delhi, to the Superintendent of Police, Delhi, New Delhi	File No. 5/6/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI	811
5.	3.6.46	Delhi League Demands a Ban on the Sangh	A note, 3 June 1946, prepared by P.E.S. Finney, Deputy Director(A), Intelligence Bureau, Home Department, GOI	File No. 5/6/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI	812
6.	18.46	An Assault on a European on Queensway, New Delhi	Report by S.C. Terry, Superintendent of Police, New Delhi, to W.D. Robinson, Senior Superintendent of Police, Delhi	File No. 7/14/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI	813
7.	27.8.46	Threat of Censorship on the Press and Politicians in Delhi	Letter by W. Christie, Chief Commissioner, Delhi, to A.E. Porter, Secretary, Home Department, GOI, Delhi	File No. 33/25/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI	813
8.	.8.46	Communal Volunteer Organisations Grow Noticeably in Delhi	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Delhi for the first half of September 1946	File No. 18/9/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI	814
9.	11.11.46	Paharganj Riots of 7 November	Letter by Mir Musthaq Ahmed, Secretary, New Delhi Congress Committee to the President, Indian National Congress, New Delhi	File No. G-7, AICC Paper, NMML.	815
10.	7.11.46	Disturbances in Delhi During <i>Bakr-Id</i>	A daily dairy of events was prepared by the Home Department, GOI, based upon police reports received. Extracts are from the entry for 7 November 1946	File No. 5/44/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI	816
11.	8.11.46	Curfew Imposed in Delhi While Troops Stand by	Extracts from a news report, 'Four killed in Delhi clash.'	<i>Hindustan Times</i>	816

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Pg No.</i>
12.	9.11.46	Hordes of Garhmukteshwar Pilgrims Converge on Delhi	A daily diary of events was prepared by the Home Department, GOI, based upon police reports received. Extracts are from the entry for 9 November 1946	File No. 5/44/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 817
13.	10.11.46	Aerial Reconnaissance Shows 1,00,000 Pilgrims Heading for Delhi	A daily diary of events was prepared by the Home Department, GOI, based upon police reports received. Extracts are from the entry for 10 November 1946	File No. 5/44/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 817
14.	12.11.46	What Happened to the Pilgrims?	A daily diary of events was prepared by the Home Department, GOI, based upon police reports received. Extracts are from the entry for 12 November 1946	File No. 5/44/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 818
15.	13.11.46	Shah Nawaz Asks for League-Congress Communal Cooperation	Letter by Shah Nawaz Khan, Major General, Indian National Army to M.A. Jinnah, New Delhi	File No. 58, AICC Papers, NMML 818
16.	13.11.46	Police Opens Fire to Quell a Spate of Fresh Rioting in Delhi	A daily diary of events was prepared by the Home Department, GOI, based upon police reports received. Extracts are from the entry for 13 November 1946	File No. 5/44/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 819
17.	24.11.46	After Ten Days of Communal Disturbances Peace Returns to Delhi	Article, 'Peace committees in Delhi.' by Y.D. Sharma	<i>People's Age</i> 820
18.	29.11.46	Riot Situation in Delhi	Telegram by the G-G, Home Department, GOI, to the Secretary of the State for India, London	File No. 5/44/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 822

4.vi Punjab

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Pg No</i>
1.	-3.46	Punjab Muslims Regard Congress-Akali-Unionist Coalition as 'Hindu Rule'	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for the Punjab for the first half of March 1946	File No. 18/3/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 822

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>		<i>Pg No.</i>
2.	-3.46	Akalis Join up with Congress Over Vexed Question of Pakistan	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for the Punjab for the first half of March 1946	File No. 18/3/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI.	823
3	-3.46	Tense Communal Relations in Lahore and Amritsar	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for the Punjab for the first half of March 1946	File No. 18/3/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI	823
4	-3.46	Punjab Communal Situation Gives Rise to Renewed Hindu Interest in the Rashtriya Swayamsewak Sangh	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for the Punjab for the second half of March 1946	File No. 18/3/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI	824
5.	6.10.46	League Launches Extra Parliamentary Offensive Against Coalition	Extracts from an article, 'Anti-Glancy-Khizar demonstration provoked into Hindu-Muslim clash.' by Romesh Chandra	<i>People's Age</i>	824
6.	-4.46	Communal Feelings and Politics Mix up Dangerously in the Punjab	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for the Punjab for the second half of April 1946	File No. 18/4/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI	827
7	-5.46	Curfew Extended in Lahore and Amritsar for Another Month	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for the Punjab for the first half of May 1946	File No. 18/3/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI	828
8	-6.46	An Uncertain Lull in Communal Tensions in the Punjab	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for the Punjab for the first half of June 1946	File No. 18/6/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI	829
9	-7.46	Marked Increase in Membership and Activities of the Sangh and Guards	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for the Punjab for the first half of July 1946	File No. 18/7/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI	829
10.	-9.46	Punjab's Atmosphere Charged with 'Muslim Hatred and Hindu Panic'	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for the Punjab for the first half of September 1946	File No. 18/9/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI	830
11	-9.46	League's Preparations for Future Hold Chilling Prospects	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for the Punjab for the second half of September 1946	File No. 18/4/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI	830
12.	-9.46	First of the Dashehra Processions Causes Clashes in Hansi	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for the Punjab for the second half of September 1946	File No. 18/9/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI	831
13.	15.12.46	Communal Situation in Rohtak District	Extracts from Paragraphs for Monthly Summary for the Cabinet	File No. 5/12/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI	831

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>		<i>Pg No.</i>
14.	24.12.46	A Response to the Cabinet Mission Plan	Extracts from a letter by Sewa Singh [?] to Tara Singh, an Akali leader, Lahore	File No. G-17, AICC Papers, NMML	832

4.vii Madras

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>		<i>Pg No.</i>
1.	8.6.46	Attempts at Conversion of Scheduled Castes to Islam in Madurai	Extracts from a letter by K.Sivanandy Devar, General Secretary, Tamilnad Hindu Mahasabha, Madura, to Ashutosh Lahiri, General Secretary, AIHMS, New Delhi, Madura	File No. P-71, AIHMS Papers, NMML	832
2.	-6.46	A Hartal in Madurai Degenerates into Communal Conflict	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Madras province for the second half of June 1946	File No. 18/6/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI	833
3.	29.7.46	Communal Troubles in Vaniyambadi, North Arcot	Extracts from an express letter by Public (General), Government of Madras, to Intelligence Bureau, Home Department, GOI, Fort St. George	File No. 5/29/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI	834
4.	9.8.46	A Congress Procession Sets Off Communal Disturbances in Ekkakudi, Ramnad	Extracts from an express letter by Public (General), Government of Madras, to Intelligence Bureau, Home Department, GOI, Fort St. George	File No. 5/33/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI	835
5.	8.10.46	Hindu-Muslim Clash at Pudukonda, Anantpur, During Dashehra	Extracts from a telegram by Public (General), Government of Madras, to Intelligence Bureau, Home Department, GOI, Fort St. George	File No. 5/43/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI	835
6.	12.10.46	At Chagalamarri, Kurnool, Hindu Procession Attacked with Sticks and Spear	Telegram by Public (General), Government of Madras, to Intelligence Bureau, Home Department, GOI	File No. 5/43/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI	835
7.	12.10.46	Serious Clash in Salem over Celebrations of Gandhi Jayanti	Telegram by Public (General), Government of Madras, to Intelligence Bureau, Home Department, GOI	File No. 5/43/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI	836

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Pg No.</i>
8.	-10.46	Evaluation of the Sangh and Guards in Madras Province	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Madras province for the second half of December 1946	Fortnightly Report, Public (General), Government of Madras Province, TNSA 836

4.viii The CP and Berar

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Pg No.</i>
1.	-5.46	Rashtriya Swayamsewak Sangh Holds Training Camp at Akola, Berar	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for CP and Berar for the second half of May 1946	File No. 18/5/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 837
2.	28.9.46	Sangh and Khaksar Activities in CP and Berar	Police Abstract of Intelligence, Vol. LXI, No. 39	File No. 72, Political and Military Department, Government of CP and Berar, MPSA 837
3	17.10.46	Hindu-Muslim Fracas in Badnera, Amraoti	Telegram by General Administration Department, Government of CP and Berar, to the Intelligence Bureau, Home Department, GOI, Nagpur	File No. 5/53/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 838

4.ix Assam

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Pg No.</i>
1.	-5.46	League Organizes Protection for East Bengal Migrants in Assam	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Assam for the first half of May 1946	File No. 18/5/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 838
2.	-5.46	Encroachments on Grazing Lands by Migrants Causes Animosity	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Assam for the second half of May 1946	File No. 18/5/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 838
3.	-7.46	Government Resolved to Prevent Unilateral Encroachments on Grazing Lands	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Assam for the first half of July 1946	File No. 18/7/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 839
4	15.7.46	Protest Meetings Against Evicting Encroachers	Extracts from Paragraphs for Monthly Summary for the Cabinet	File No. 5/12/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 839
5.	29.8.46	Disturbances in Sylhet on August 16	News report, 'Troops called out at Sylhet.'	<i>Hindustan Times</i> 840
6.	11.11.46	Eviction from Assam of East Bengali Immigrants	Note by E.J. Beveridge, Assistant Director, Intelligence Bureau, Home Department, GOI	File No. 119/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 840

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>		<i>Pg No.</i>
7.	15.12.46	Communal Situation in Assam	Extracts from Paragraphs for Monthly Summary for the Cabinet	File No. 5/12/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI	841
8.	11.1.47	Evictions Continue Slowly and Steadily	Note by P.E.S. Finney, Assistant Director, Intelligence Bureau, Home Department, GOI	File No. 119/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI	842
9.	11.1.47	Visit by Khurshid Anwar to Assam Sets Back Communal Relations	Note by P.E.S. Finney, Assistant Director, Intelligence Bureau, Home Department, GOI	File No. 119/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI	842
10.	14.1.47	Limitations Imposed Upon Size of Religious Processions	Extracts from Paragraphs for Monthly Summary for the Cabinet	File No. 5/12/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI	842

4.x Orissa

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>		<i>Pg No.</i>
1.	9.8.46	Bhadrak, Balasore, Communal Fracas: Report by Revenue Commissioner Unsatisfactory	Extracts from Report No.9 by the Governor of Orissa to the Viceroy	File No. 5/31/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI	843

4.xi Sind

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>		<i>Pg No.</i>
1.	6.1.46	Disturbances at a Meeting in Larana, Sind, Addressed by Jawaharlal Nehru	Extracts from a news report, 'Muslim scene at Nehru meeting.'	<i>Statesman</i>	844
2.	12.4.46	Condition of Hindus Under Muslim League Ministry in Sind	Extracts from a letter by Sind Provincial Hindu Sabha, Karachi, to Working Committee, AIHMS, New Delhi, Karachi	File No. C-117, AIHMS Papers, NMML	844
	18.6.46	Increased Activity by Hindu and Muslim Volunteer Organisations in Nawabshah District	Extracts from Paragraphs for Monthly Summary for the Cabinet	File No. 5/12/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI	846
	17.7.46	Sind Hindus Ask for Protection of Congress	Printed circular by Arya Pratinidhi Sabha, Karachi, undated. but received by AIHMS, New Delhi	File No. C-105, AIHMS Papers, NMML	846

4.xii North West Frontier Province

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Pg No.</i>
1.		Rioting in Abbottabad, NWFP	Telegram by N.O.R.W.E.F. [??] to Intelligence Bureau, Home Department, GOI, undated Peshawar, received 31 July 1946	File No. 5/30/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 847
2.	26.8.46	Mitchell Report Blames District Authorities for Spread of Abbottabad Riots	Extracts from a news report, 'Abbottabad (N.W.F.P.) riot enquiry.'	<i>Hindustan Times</i> 848
3.	1.10.46	Fakir of Ipi Welcomes Interim Government at a Tribal <i>Jirga</i>	Extracts from a news report, 'Frontier tribes solidly behind Congress.'	<i>Hindustan Times</i> 848
4.	24.10.46	Jawaharlal Nehru and Party Attacked at Dargai and Malakand Fort	Extracts from a news report, 'Political Agent accused of conspiracy.'	<i>Hindustan Times</i> 849
5.	14.1.46	Transborder Tribals Fined for Incursions and Attacks at Hazara	Extracts from Paragraphs for Monthly Summary for the Cabinet	File No. 5/12/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 849

4.xiii Baluchistan

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Pg No</i>
1	19.46	Communal Disturbances in Baluchistan	Cypher telegram from Balachistan, Ziarat (?), to Foreign (?), New Delhi	File No. 5/51/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 850

4.xiv Ajmer-Merwara

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Pg No</i>
1.	5.4.46	Ajmer-Merwara Muslims' Lack of Job Opportunities in the Services	Copy of a letter under the heading, 'Jobbery in Ajmer-Merwara' published in the <i>Dawn</i> is enclosed in the file.	File No. 37/11/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 850

5. Economy and Society

INTRODUCTION

5.A Economic Conditions

5.A.1 Food Situation

<i>S.No</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Pg No.</i>
1.	-1.46	Drought Causes Extensive Damage to Crops in Madras Province	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Madras Province for the first half of January 1946	Fortnightly Reports, Public (General), Government of Madras, TNSA 853

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Pg No.</i>
2.	16.1.46	Food Position in Bombay Province	Extracts from minutes of a meeting held on 16 January 1946 by the Food Advisory Council, Finance (Supply) Department, Government of Bombay	File No. 294, Purshotamdas Thakurdas Papers, NMML 854
3.	31.1.46	Central Legislative Assembly Discussion on Food Shortages	Extracts from a news report, 'India faces food shortage threat.'	<i>Statesman</i> 854
4.	3.2.46	Lucknow Hunger-march	News report, 'Hunger-march by 50,000 Lucknow citizens'	<i>Hindustan Times</i> 855
5.	-2.46	Shortage of Rice in Madras Province	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Madras Province for the first half of February 1946	Fortnightly Reports, Public (General), Government of Madras, TNSA 855
6.	16.1.46	Viceroy Recommends Cut in Cereal Ration in Bombay Province	Extracts from minutes of a meeting held on 16 January 1946 by the Food Advisory Council, Finance (Supply) Department, Government of Bombay	File No. 294, Purshotamdas Thakurdas Papers, NMML 856
7.	14.3.46	Destitutes in Calcutta	News report, 'Grim shadows of famine in Bengal.'	<i>Free Press Journal</i> 857
8.	15.3.46	Congress Unwilling to Join Food Council Proposed by Viceroy	Extracts from news report, 'New Food Council plan rejected by Congress.'	<i>Statesman</i> 857
9.	.3.46	Political Capital Made Out of Ration Cuts in Madras Province	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Madras Province for the first half of March 1946	File No. 18/3/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 858
10.	19.3.46	Government Measures to Protect Vulnerable Groups in South India	Extracts from the minutes of a conference held by the Food Department, GOI, at New Delhi	File No. 357 (Reel No. 23), All India Women's Congress Papers, NMML 859
11.	20.3.46	Steps Taken by Bombay Government to Ameliorate Food Shortages	Extracts from minutes of a meeting held on 20 March 1946 by the Food Advisory Council, Finance (Supply) Department, Government of Bombay	File No. 294, Purshotamdas Thakurdas Papers, NMML 861
12.	24.3.46	Cultural Workers' Committee for Fighting Famine	Extracts from an article, 'Call for united fight for bread and freedom.'	<i>People's Age</i> 862
13.	31.3.46	Demonstrations in the Punjab Against Food Hoarders	Extracts from an article, 'Food battle in Punjab towns and villages.'	<i>People's Age</i> 863

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>		<i>Pg No.</i>
14.	31.3.46	Strikes in Calcutta Against the Ration Cuts	Extracts from a news report, 'One and a half lakh workers strike.' by Nikhil Chakravarty	<i>People's Age</i>	864
15.	-3.46	Drought and Hoarding Cause Severe Food Shortages in Bengal	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Bengal for the second half of March 1946	File No. 18/3/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI	864
16.	7.4.46	Starvation Deaths on the Streets of Calcutta	Extracts from a news report, 'Calcutta hunger deaths.'	<i>Hindustan Times</i>	865
17.	9.4.46	Threat of Famine Because of India's War Effort	News report, 'India starves because she joined Britain's war.'	<i>Free Press Journal</i>	865
18.	-4.46	Supply of Food Grains Getting Worse in Bombay Province	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Bombay Province for the first half of April 1946	File No. 18/4/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI.	866
19.	21.4.46	H.K. Mahtab's Solution for the Oriyan Food Problem	Extracts from an article, 'Will crop failure mean another famine in Orissa?'	<i>People's Age</i>	867
20.	-4.46	Outlook Gloomy in Most Districts of Madras Province	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Madras Province for the second half of April 1946	File No. 18/4/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI	870
21.	26.5.46	Food Shortages in Bengal Underestimated	Extracts from an article, 'Will Bengal face another famine?'	<i>People's Age</i>	871
22.	9.6.46	Cloth Rationing in Bengal Criticised	Extracts from an article, 'Nine-man gang controls Bengal's cloth.'	<i>People's Age</i>	872
23.	9.6.46	An All India Analysis of the Food Situation	Extracts from an article, 'Failing pulse of India's food system?' By A.S.R. Chari	<i>People's Age</i>	873
24.	-6.46	Monsoon Alleviates the Food Situation in Madras Province	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Madras Province for the first half of June 1946	Fortnightly Reports, Public (General), Government of Madras, TNSA	876
25.	16.6.46	Food Prices Shoot up in Bihar	Extracts from an article 'One million Biharis face starvation.' By Indradeep Sinha	<i>People's Age</i>	877
26.	23.6.46	Six Districts of Bengal in Grip of Famine	Extracts from an article, 'Famine lifts its ugly head in Bengal.' By Bhowani Sen.	<i>People's Age</i>	877
27.	30.6.46	Rice Ration Cut in Madras Province	Extracts from an article, 'Madras food crisis.'	<i>People's Age</i>	877

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Pg No.</i>
28.	18.7.46	Congress Accuses Bengal League Ministry of Negligence	Extracts from a news report, 'Famine conditions in Bengal.'	<i>Bombay Chronicle</i> 878
29.	-.7.46	Food Situation in Madras Province	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Madras Province for the second half of July 1946	Fortnightly Reports, Public (General), Government of Madras, TNSA 879
30.	1.9.46	1000 Die Weekly of the Plague and Small Pox in Bihar	Extracts from an article, 'Epidemics take heavy toll in Bihar.'	<i>People's Age</i> 879
31.	1.11.46	Bombay Provincial TUC Resolution on the Food Situation	Resolution proposed by Dinkar Desai and seconded by V. Chaudary at a meeting of the Bombay Provincial Trade Union Committee	File No. 79, AITUC Papers, NMML 880
32.	-.12.46	Floods Damage Crops in Madras Province	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Madras Province for the second half of December 1946	Fortnightly Reports, Public (General), Government of Madras, TNSA 881

5.A.ii Economic Policies

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Pg No.</i>
1.	10.1.46	Excess Profits Tax Counterproductive in Postwar India	Extracts from an article, 'Abolish the Excess Profits Tax.' By P.C. Jain.	<i>Free Press Journal</i> 881
2.	15.1.46	Demonetisation Ordinance Ill-conceived and Immoral	Editorial, 'Fight, fight fight!'	<i>Free Press Journal</i> 882
3.	15.1.46	Bombay Against the Proposed Sales Tax	Extracts from a news report, 'City-wide hartal to protest against proposed tax'	<i>Free Press Journal</i> 883
4.	16.1.46	Demonetisations Ordinance Iniquitous and Unsuccessful	Extracts from an editorial, 'Stop this fooling.'	<i>Free Press Journal</i> 883
5.	21.1.46	The Impact of the Currency Ordinance	Extracts from a news report, 'Calcutta girl's marriage postponed.'	<i>Free Press Journal</i> 884
6.	21.1.46	G.D. Birla on the Demonetisations Ordinance	Extracts from a news report, 'New Delhi is riding roughshod over people's rights.'	<i>Free Press Journal</i> 884
	21.1.46	The Demonetisations Ordinance Gravely Flawed	Extracts from a news report 'Ordinance that paralyses trade and retards development.'	<i>Free Press Journal</i> 885

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Pg No.</i>
8.	5.3.46	Anti-sales Tax Violence in Dhaka	Extracts from a news report, 'Crowds raid Dacca cinema house.'	<i>Free Press Journal</i> , 885
9.	9.5.46	Postwar International Trade and Indian Interests	Extracts from a news report, 'No bartering of right to shape India's economic destiny.'	<i>Free Press Journal</i> 886
10	14.12.46	Discussion with Britain Regarding India's Sterling Balances	Extracts from a copy of a letter by Purshotamdas Thakurdas to G.D. Birla, Bombay	File No. 336, Purshotamdas Thakurdas Papers, NMML 888
11.	29.12.46	Indo-British Agreement on the Manufacture of Textile Spinning Machinery	Extracts from an article, 'British business gets firm grip over India's textile industry.' By Arun Bose	<i>People's Age</i> 888

5.A.iii Hirakud Dam Issue

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Pg No</i>
1.	22.6.46	Agitation Against Hirakud Dam in Sambalpur, Orissa	Extracts from a letter by C.M. Trivedi, Governor of Orissa, to H.K. Mehtab, P.M. of Orissa, Puri	File No. 3, Dr. Harekrushna Mahtab Papers, NMML. 890
2.	29.6.46	Economic Development of Orissa	Extracts from a letter by Nitvanad Kanungo, Minister, Government of Orissa, to H.K. Mehtab, P.M. of Orissa, Cuttack	File No. 3, Dr. Harekrushna Mahtab Papers, NMML. 891
3.	6.8.46	Government Takes Hirakud Agitation Seriously	Letter by C.M. Trivedi, Governor of Orissa, to H.K. Mehtab, P.M. of Orissa, Cuttack	File No. 3, Dr. Harekrushna Mahtab Papers, NMML 892
4.	10.8.46	Should the Dam be Built at All?	Copy of a letter by H.K. Mehtab, P.M. of Orissa, to C.M. Trivedi, Governor of Orissa	File No. 3, Dr. Harekrushna Mahtab Papers, NMML 892
5.	13.8.46	Pros and Cons of the Hirakud Dam Project	Extracts from a copy of a letter by H.K. Mehtab, P.M. of Orissa, to 8. Keskar, General Secretary, A.I.C.C., Allahabad	File No. 7, Dr. Harekrushna Mahtab Papers, NMML 893
6.	16.9.46	Development of Oriya Salt Industry	Extracts from a letter by C.M. Trivedi, Governor of Orissa, to H.K. Mehtab, P.M. of Orissa, Cuttack	File No. 3, Dr. Harekrushna Mahtab Papers, NMML 893

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Pg No.</i>
7.	7.10.46	Government Participation in the Industrial Development of Orissa	Extracts from copy of a letter by V. Narahari Rao, Secretary, Finance Department, GOI, to Governor of Orissa, New Delhi	File No. 3, Dr. Harekushna Mahtab Papers, NMML 894
8.	13.10.46	Government Not to Participate Appreciably in Oriyan Industries	Extracts from a copy of a letter by H.K. Mehtab, P.M. of Orissa, to C.M. Trivedi, Governor of Orissa, Chandipur	File No. 3, Dr. Harekushna Mahtab Papers, NMML. 895
9.	18.10.46	Maharaja of Patna Behind the Hirakud Dam Agitation	Copy of a letter by H.K. Mehtab, P.M. of Orissa, to C.M. Trivedi, Governor of Orissa	File No. 4, Dr. Harekushna Mahtab Papers, NMML 895
10.	16.11.46	Objections to the Dam to be Dealt with Carefully	Copy of a letter by the Governor of Orissa to B.K. Gokhale, Secretary, Department of Works, Power and Mines, GOI	File No. 34, Dr. Harekushna Mahtab Papers, NMML 895
11.	20.11.46	Government Asks for an Exhaustive Project Report	Extracts from a copy of a letter by B.K. Gokhale, Secretary, Department of Works, Mines and Power, GOI, to Governor of Orissa	File No. 34, Dr. Harekrushna Mahtab Papers, NMML 896
12.	20.11.46	Local Congress MLA Demands the Project be Abandoned	Copy of a letter by Laxminarayana Mishra, MLA (Sambalpur), to the Secretary, AICC, Camp Meerut	File No. P-18, AICC Papers, NMML 897
13.	22.11.46	Central Government Confident of Overcoming Local Resistance	Extracts from a copy of a letter by C.H. Bhabha, Member, Department of Works, Mines and Power, GOI, to Governor of Orissa	File No. 34, Dr. Harekrushna Mahtab Papers, NMML 897
14.	8.12.46	Clarification Sought Regarding Activities of Local Congress MLA	Extracts from a letter by C.M. Trivedi, Governor of Orissa, to Harekrishna Mehtab, P.M. of Orissa, Cuttack	File No. 34, Dr. Harekrushna Mahtab Papers, NMML 898
15.	29.12.46	Provincial Congress Divided Over the Issue	Copy of a letter by Surendranath Dwivedi, Secretary Utkal Provincial Congress Committee, Cuttack, to the Permanent Secretary, AICC, Allahabad, Cuttack[?]	File No. P-18, AICC Papers, NMML 898

5.B Caste

5.B.1 General

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Pg No.</i>
1.	17.1.46	Vallabhbhai Patel on Untouchability in India	Extracts from a news report, 'Blot of untouchability will be wiped out.'	<i>Free Press Journal</i> 899
2.	12.2.46	Conference of Delhi Provincial Scheduled Castes' Federation	News report, 'Harijans want power.'	<i>Statesman</i> 900
3.	5.3.46	Scheduled Castes' Federation's Election Campaign	Extracts from 'Letters Addressed And Replies Received Thereto And Speeches Delivered From Time To Time By B.R. Ambedkar,' compiled by Nanak Chand Rattu, Madras	File No. 1-3, B.R. Ambedkar Papers, NMML. 900
4.	12.3.46	Fast to Open Venugopalaswami Temple, Mulepetta (Andhra), to <i>Dalits</i>	News report, 'Fast for temple-entry.'	<i>Free Press Journal</i> 901
5.	2.4.46	Scheduled Castes' Federation and the Congress	Extracts from a news report, 'Ambedkar, Saboteur of freedom struggle.'	<i>Free Press Journal</i> 901
6.	5.6.46	Scheduled Castes' Federation Threatens Direct Action	Extracts from a news report 'Scheduled Castes threaten direct action.'	<i>Hindustan Times</i> 901
7.	8.6.46	<i>Dalits</i> Feel Betrayed by Cabinet Mission's Award	Extracts from a news report, 'Abject betrayal of depressed classes.'	<i>Bombay Chronicle</i> 902
8.	22.7.46	B.R. Ambedkar Explains Poona Satyagraha	News report, 'Ambedkar to carry on fight to the end.'	<i>Free Press Journal</i> 902
9.	25.7.46	Scheduled Castes to Become Muslim Converts?	Extracts from a news report, 'Ambedkar parades as Congress benefactor'.	<i>Bombay Chronicle</i> 904
10.	28.7.46	Communist Party of India and the <i>Dalit</i> Movement	Editorial, 'Scheduled Caste satyagraha.'	<i>People's Age</i> 905
11.	27.8.46	Renunciation of Titles by Scheduled Castes' Federation Members	News report, 'Title renunciation spreads.'	<i>Free Press Journal</i> 907
12.	1.9.46	Congress and the <i>Dalits</i>	Letter by Vallabhbhai Patel to B.R. Ambedkar, New Delhi	File No. 8, AITUC Papers, NMML. 908

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Pg No.</i>
13.	12.9.46	B.R. Ambedkar Uncertain of Congress Attitude Towards <i>Dalits</i>	Letter by B.R. Ambedkar to N.M. Joshi, Bombay	File No. 8, AITUC Papers, NMML 909
14.	17.10.46	Muslim League Selects a <i>Dalit</i> for the Interim Government	News report, 'Service to the nation, Mr. Mandal's aim.'	<i>Free Press Journal</i> 909
15.	4.11.46	Harijan Sevak Sangh Wants Entry Opened to Dakore Temple, Gujarat	Letter by A.V. Thakkar, General Secretary, Harijan Sevak Sangh, Delhi, to Purshotamdas Thakurdas, Bombay, Camp Sodepur, Calcutta	File No. 322, Purshotamdas Thakurdas Papers, NMML 910
16.	13.11.46	Caste Discrimination Banned by Bengal Religious Bodies	News report, 'Hindu society to be shorn of caste.'	<i>Free Press Journal</i> , 911
17.	22.12.46	Congress and Andhra Harijan Sevak Sangh Organise Temple Entry Day	Extracts from 'Letters Addressed and Replies Received Thereto and Speeches Delivered from Time to Time by B.R. Ambedkar,' compiled by Nanak Chand Rattu, Madras	File No. 1-3 (Roll No.1), B.R. Ambedkar Papers, NMML. 912
18.	20.11.46	Separate Electorates Demanded for Scheduled Castes	Extracts from 'Letters Addressed and Replies Received Thereto and Speeches Delivered From Time to Time By B.R. Ambedkar,' compiled by Nanak Chand Rattu, Bombay	File No. 1-3 (Roll No.1), B.R. Ambedkar Papers, NMML 912
19.	27.12.46	Scheduled Castes' Federation's Terms to Join Freedom Struggle	News report, 'Give us share of power, and we shall fight for freedom.'	<i>Free Press Journal</i> 912
20.	-	Indian Social Congress' Appeal to United Nations Organisation	Extracts from an undated pamphlet, 'The Indian problem: Solution Suggested.' By the Indian Social Congress, Lahore	File No. C-90, AIHMS Papers, NMML 913

5.B.ii CP and Berar

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Pg No</i>
1.	-3.46	Trouble Between Caste Hindus and Mahars	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for CP and Berar for the second half of March 1946	File No. 18/3/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 915

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Pg No</i>
2.	-4.46	Caste Tensions in CP and Berar	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for CP and Berar for the second half of April 1946	File No. 18/4/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 915
3.	14.5.46	Two Die in Caste Clash in Nagpur	News report, 'Two killed in Nagpur.'	<i>Free Press Journal</i> 916
4.	-5.46	Caste Relations Remain Strained in Nagpur	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for CP and Berar for the first half of May 1946	File No. 18/5/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 916
5.	-5.46	Peace Committees Set Up to Reduce Communal Tension	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for CP and Berar for the second half of May 1946	File No. 18/5/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 917
6.	-5.46	Strikes at Empress Mills, Nagpur, Following Caste Clashes	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for CP and Berar for the first half of May 1946	File No. 18/5/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 917
7.	18.6.46	Dispute Over the Taking of Water from Wells	Extracts from Paragraphs for Monthly Summary for the Cabinet	File No. 5/12/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 918
8.	.6.46	Friction Between Mahars and Gaolis at Kamptee	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for CP and Berar for the second half of June 1946	File No. 18/6/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 918
9.	-7.46	Stone Throwing in a Koshti Neighbourhood of Nagpur	Extracts from Paragraphs for Monthly Summary for the Cabinet	File No. 5/12/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 918
10.	.7.46	Scheduled Castes' Federation Resorts to Direct Action	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for CP and Berar for the second half of July 1946	File No. 18/7/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 918
11.	17.8.46	Poona Pact Protest Day, 16 August 1946	Report by S. Sanyal, Deputy Commissioner, Nagpur, to M.I. Rahim, Commissioner, Nagpur Division, Nagpur	File No. 12, Political and Military Department Government of CP and Berar, MPSA 919
12.	-9.46	Scheduled Castes' Federation to Disrupt Legislative Assembly	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for CP and Berar for the first half of September 1946	File No. 18/9/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 921
13.	28.9.46	Scheduled Castes' Federation Continues <i>Satyagraha</i>	Extracts from Police Abstract of Intelligence, Vol. LXI, No. 39, Nagpur	File No. 72, Political and Military Department Government of CP and Berar, MPSA 922

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Pg No.</i>
14.	~.9.46	Government Response to Scheduled Castes' Federation's <i>Satyagraha</i>	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for CP and Berar for the second half of September 1946	File No. 18/9/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 922
15.	1.10.46	Scheduled Castes' Federation Leadership Arrested	News report, 'Scheduled Caste satyagraha.'	<i>Free Press Journal</i> 923
16.	15.12.46	Government's Views on Scheduled Castes' Federation's Politics	Extracts from Paragraphs for Monthly Summary for the Cabinet	File No. 5/12/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 923

5.B.iii Bombay Province

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Pg No.</i>
1.	5.1.46	Bombay Police <i>Lathi</i> Charge Funeral Procession	News report, 'Unruly funeral procession.'	<i>Statesman</i> 924
2.	13.1.46	Primary Elections for Bombay Scheduled Caste Seats	Extracts from an article, 'Clashes between supporters of rival candidates.' By P.B. Rangnekar	<i>People's Age</i> 924
3.	~.3.46	Ambedkarites Clash with Congress Harijans in Ahmedabad	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Bombay province for the first half of March 1946	File No. 18/3/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 926
4.	14.4.46	Aftermath of Assembly Elections in Bombay	Extracts from an article, 'Congress leaders plan: police and goondas carry out terror. By P.B. Rangnekar	<i>People's Age</i> 927
5.	~.4.46	Scheduled Castes' Federation's Bitterness at Election Defeat	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Bombay province for the first half of April 1946.	File No. 18/4/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 928
6.	30.5.46	Violent Caste Hindu—Ambedkarite Clash at Worli	Extracts from a news report, 'Harijan-Hindu clash near Worli chawls.'	<i>Free Press Journal</i> 929
7.	31.5.46	Curfew Imposed in Riot-affected Areas of Bombay	Extracts from a news report, 'Police open fire twice.'	<i>Bombay Chronicle</i> 929
8.	14.6.46	Casualties During Clashes in Wor. <i>Chawls</i>	Extracts from Paragraphs for Monthly Summary for the Cabinet	File No. 18/6/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 930
9.	15.7.46	Demonstrations Prohibited in Front of Legislative Assembly	Extracts from a news report, 'Scheduled Caste Satyagrahis to defy ban.'	<i>Free Press Journal</i> 930

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>		<i>Pg No</i>
10.	15.7.46	Caste Clashes Continue in Bombay and Nashik	Extracts from Paragraphs for Monthly Summary for the Cabinet	File No. 5/12/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI	931
11.	-7.46	Defiance of Ban on Demonstrations Around Council Hall, Pune	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Bombay province for the first half of July 1946.	File No. 18/7/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI	931
12.	16.7.46	Scheduled Castes' Federation <i>Satyagrahis</i> Court Arrest at Pune	News report, '20 arrested in Poona.'	<i>Free Press Journal</i>	932
13.	20.7.46	Bombay Government's Explanations for the Ban	News report, 'Schedule Casts <i>Satyagraha</i> takes urgently Colour.'	<i>Free Press Journal</i>	933
14.	11.9.46	Bill to Eradicate Untouchability in Bombay Province	News report, 'A Character of Freedom for Haryans.'	<i>Free Press Journal</i>	934

5.B.iv Madras

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>		<i>Pg No</i>
1.	13.5.46	Police Open Fire at Dravidian Federation's Conference at Madurai	News report, 'Police open fire on Madura crowd: one killed.'	<i>Free Press Journal</i> , 13 May 1946.	935
2.	-5.46	Dravida Kazhagam Activities	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Madras province for the first half of May 1946	File No. 18/5/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI	936
3.	16.5.46	Government Report of the Riots at Madurai Blackshirt Conference	Report by the Chief Secretary, Government of Madras, to the Secretary, Home Department, GOI, Fort St. George	File No. 5/9/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI	936
4.	-6.46	Dravida Kazhagam Asks for Prohibition Throughout the Province	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Madras Province for the first half of June 1946	Fortnightly Report, Public (General), Government of Madras, TNSA	937
5.	-8.46	Caste Politics in Madras Province	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Madras Province for the second half of August 1946	Fortnightly Report, Public (General), Government of Madras, TNSA	938
6.	-11.46	Scheduled Castes' Federation, Dravida Kazhagam and Muslim League	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Madras Province for the second half of November 1946	Fortnightly Report, Public (General), Government of Madras, TNSA	938

5.B.v United Provinces

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>		<i>Pg No.</i>
1.	5.7.46	Saharanpur Chamars Demand Increases in Wages	Extracts from Weekly Report No. 27	Weekly Reports, CID Records, Government of the United Provinces, UP SA	938
2.	-.7.46	Ambedkarites Demonstrate Outside Council Chamber, Lucknow	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for United Provinces for the first half of July 1946	File No. 18/7/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI	939
3.	26.7.46	4 August, Protest Day Against Cabinet Mission	Extracts from Weekly Report No. 29	Weekly Reports, CID Records, Government of the United Provinces, UP SA	939
4.	16.8.46	Etawah <i>Dalits</i> Criticize Zamindars	Extracts from Weekly Report No. 32	Weekly Reports, CID Records, Government of the United Provinces, UP SA	939
5.	20.9.46	Muslim League Addresses Scheduled Caste Meeting at Kanpur	Extracts from Weekly Report No. 37	Weekly Reports, CID Records, Government of the United Provinces, UP SA	940
6.	11.10.46	Kanpur Congress Unsuccessful in Winning Back <i>Dalits</i>	Extracts from Weekly Report No. 39	Weekly Reports, CID Records, Government of the United Provinces, UP SA	940
7.	8.11.46	<i>Dalits</i> Express Faith in B.R. Ambedkar and M.A. Jinnah	Extracts from Weekly Report No. 43	Weekly Reports, CID Records, Government of the United Provinces, UP SA	940
8.	15.11.46	Allahabad Chamars Demand Better Service and Living Conditions	Extracts from Weekly Report No. 44	Weekly Reports, CID Records, Government of the United Provinces, UP SA	940
9.	13.12.46	Bijnor and Saharanpur Hindus Open Temples to <i>Dalits</i>	Extracts from Weekly Report No. 48	Weekly Reports, CID Records, Government of the United Provinces, UP SA	941
10.	14.12.46	Backward Classes Want Reservations like the Scheduled Castes	Extracts from a memorandum submitted by the Backward Classes Federation of India, Farrukhabad, to the President, Constituent Assembly, New Delhi, Farrukhabad	File No. CL 3 (Part 3), AICC Papers, NMML	941

cxxii *Calendar of Documents*

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Pg No.</i>
11.	25.12.46	Backward Classes Want Favourable Terms from Government, Congress	Resolution passed by the Executive Committee, United Provinces Nayee Brahman Sabha, Farrukhabad, and submitted to J.B. Kriplani, Congress President, New Delhi, Farrukhabad	File No. CL 3 (Part 3), AICC Papers, NMML 942
5.B.vi Bengal				
<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Pg No.</i>
1.	20.1.46	Communist Scheduled Caste Electoral Candidate	Extracts from an article, 'Scheduled Caste fighter against social injustice.'	<i>People's Age</i> 943
2.	14.1.46	Intra-Scheduled Castes Political Rivalry	Extracts from Paragraphs for Monthly Summary for the Cabinet	File No. 5/12/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 945
5.B.vii Punjab				
<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Pg No.</i>
1.	2.4.46	Plight of Harijans in the Punjab	Extracts from a letter to the editor titled, 'Harijans in the Punjab.'	<i>Hindustan Times</i> 915
5.C Regional Issues				
5.C.i Assam and the Northeast				
<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Pg No.</i>
1.	12.5.46	Bengali Immigration into Assam	Extracts from a letter by Khagendra Nath Samadder, MLA, Nowgong, Assam, to Dr. Shyama Prasad Mukherjee, President, AIHMS, Calcutta, Nowgong	File No. C-116, AIHMS Papers, NMML 947
2.	-5.46	Assamese Fear Cabinet Mission's Grouping Proposals	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Assam for the second half of May 1946.	File No. 18/5/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 950
3.	-7.46	Naga Hills Tribesmen Want Separate Electorates	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Assam for the second half of July 1946.	File No. 18/7/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 951
4.	19.9.46	Tribal Clash in Siang Valley, Assam	Memo by P.L.S. James Assistant Political Officer, Siang Valley, Assam.	File No. 7/15/46, Home (Police) Department, GOI, NAI 951

5.C.ii Bihar

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Pg No.</i>
1.	6.3.46	A Case for Mithila Autonomy	Letter from Sabhadia Jha, a Mithila patriot residing in Paris, to AISPC, Paris	File No. 249, AISPC Papers, NMML 954
2.	-.4.46	<i>Adivasis</i> Support for Muslim League	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Bihar for the second half of April 1946	File No. 18/4/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 954
3.	-.5.46	<i>Adivasis</i> and the Congress	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Bihar for the first half of May 1946	File No. 18/5/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 955
4.	-.9.46	<i>Adivasis</i> Not to Participate in Muslim League's Direct Action Day	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Bihar for the first half of September 1946	File No. 18/9/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 955
5.	-.9.46	Jaipal Singh Addresses a Large <i>Adivasi</i> Gathering Near Ranchi	Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Bihar for the second half of September 1946	File No. 18/9/46, Home (Political), GOI, NAI 955

5.D Women and Freedom

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Pg No.</i>
1.	1.1.46	AIWC Report	Extracts from a news report, 'Women's Conference demands Repeal of D.I.R.	<i>Statesman</i> 956
2.	26.1.46	Benares Hindu University Disallows Teaching of Vedas to Women	Extracts from a news report, 'Women and the Vedas.'	<i>Hindustan Times</i> 958
3.	19-20.2.46	Women Employment and the Federal Public Service Commission	Notes circulated between Department of Agriculture and Establishments Section, Home Department, GOI	File No. 210/46, Home (Establishments), GOI, NAI 958
4.	7-10.5.46	Women and Employment within the Government Services	Notes circulated within the Home Department, GOI	File No. 30/16/46, Home (Establishments), GOI, NAI 959
5.	26-28.7.46	Supplementary Agenda for AIWC Meeting at Calcutta.	Supplementary Agenda for the Standing Committee, AIWC, at the meeting to be held in Calcutta	File No. 419, AIWC Papers, NMML 960
6.	2.8.46	Resolutions Passed by AIWC	Statement by the Honorary General Secretary, AIWC, Bombay	File No. 361, AIWC Papers, NMML 962

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<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Pg No</i>
7.	18.8.46	Report of the AIWC Meeting at Calcutta	News report, 'Women leaders meet.' by Perin Romesh Chandra	<i>People's Age</i> 963
8.	28.8.46	AIWC Wants Dismissal of Bengal Ministry	Statement by Hansa Mehta, President, AIWC, published in <i>Bombay Chronicle</i> , under the heading, 'Wanted impartial inquiry.'	File No. 419, AIWC Papers, NMML 964
9.	16.9.46	AIWC Unhappy at Muslim League Not Joining Interim Government	President's Circular No. 4, to Branch Representatives and Members of Standing Committee, AIWC, Bombay	File No. 419, AIWC Papers, NMML 965
10.	29.9.46	AIWC Circular on Untouchability	Circular No. 1, by Member-in-Charge, Social Disabilities (Untouchability), to Members of the Standing Committee, and Branch Representatives, AIWC, Calcutta	File No. 419, AIWC Papers, NMML 966

5.E Culture

5.E.i Hindi as India's Lingua Franca

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Pg No.</i>
1.	10.5.46	Hindi as India's Lingua Franca	News report, 'Lingua franca of India is Hindi.'	<i>Hindustan Times</i> 967
2.	16.5.46	Hindustani as Common Language of Indian People	Extracts from a news report, 'Magazine to promote Hindustani as common language.'	<i>Hindustan Times</i> 967

5.E.ii Indian People's Theatre Association

<i>S.No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Pg No.</i>
1.	-	<i>Iebhaga</i> Song	Tebhaga Song, c 1946, translated from Salil Chaudhari, <i>Ghoom Bhangar Gan</i> (in Bengali), Calcutta, 1951	968
2.	71.46	Review of Patriotic Film <i>Shikari</i>	Article, 'Freedom's good fight in a film.'	<i>Free Press Journal</i> 968

S.No.	Date	Documents	Source	Pg No.
3.	16.4.46	Indian People's Theatre Association Performs "India Immortal"	A small boxed advertisement for the Indian People's Theatre Association's performance of "India Immortal." A programme of music and dance to be held at the Excelsior Theatre, Bombay, on 16-17 April 1946.	<i>Free Press Journal</i> 969
4.	2.6.46	Indian People's Theatre Association's First Film, <i>Dharti ke Lal</i>	Article, ' <i>Dharti Ke Lal</i> blazes trail for realism on screen.' By Mulk Raj Anand.	<i>People's Age</i> 969
5.	1.8.46	Indian People's Theatre Association's Cultural Programme, <i>Salute Kashmir</i>	Article, ' <i>Salute Kashmir</i> cultural function in Bombay.	<i>People's Age</i> 971
6.	6.10.46	Progressive Writers Association's Appeal for Communal Harmony	Extracts from a statement circulated by the All India Progressive Writers' Association, and published in the newspaper under the heading, 'Progressive Writers pledge to end fratricidal war.'	<i>People's Age</i> 973
7.	10.11.46	A Mymensingh Village Poet	A letter to the editor by Sajjad Zaheer, General Secretary, All India Progressive Writers' Association.	<i>People's Age</i> 974

I. BRITISH INDIA

Chapter 1. Anti-British Protests and Movements

Post-facto justifications for colonial rule that sometimes lurk behind moods of Raj nostalgia often suggest that the British had been only too eager to leave India, at least once the Second World War was over and Labour had come to power in Britain. Our volume begins with two documents pointing on a different direction, for they illustrate diehard British attitudes at the highest levels of the Raj. Commander-in-Chief Auchinleck on 1 January holds forth to officers of the army, navy and air force about the need to remain the 'firm base'. In his opinion, a new recruit cannot drive a fast lorry, and years of 'help and guidance' were needed before a safe changeover to 'self-government' (1.i; Doc. 1). On 21/22 February, officials of the Home Department are working out arguments to justify the recruitment of more Englishmen into the ICS. The Secretary of State has the duty of 'handing over the administrative machine in ... the best possible condition.' The new government might even decide 'to retain existing British officers,' and, more to the point, perhaps, if some Englishmen could be recruited quickly, successor regimes would 'be committed to the payment of certain grants to them' (1.i; Doc. 2). Documents like these need to be placed alongside certain better known aspects of official history during 1945–1946. There were many instances of bureaucratic pressures for gradualness in reform was using a 'Service morale' argument, ever since Labour came to power in Britain in August 1945 (Mansergh VI; 14, 16, 47, 67). Wavell meanwhile was making repeated efforts to push through his 'Breakdown Plan', preempting negotiations with Indian leaders through a diluted form of Pakistan already in December 1945–February 1946 (Ibid; 315, 316, 406, 428).

The major part of the remaining documents in this chapter fall under a kind of 'Army and People' rubric. The Second World War had brought about a quantum leap in military presence in India—a vast expansion in British Indian armed forces, and stationing or passage through India of large numbers of Allied troops. There were the usual corollaries in terms of misbehaviour with civilians, cases or rumours of rape, and racism. Memories of such incidents still recur in the conversation of people of that generation, Documents 1.i; 3–5, of our collection give details of one such incident, and the reactions to it, from Chittagong, in January 1946. More significant, of course, and much better known, are the complex of happenings around the Indian National Army (INA) trials issue. British prestige was thought by many officials to demand stern punishment of large numbers of INA prisoners. Up to 600 courts martial had been visualized in August 1946 (Mansergh VI; 17), but this created a confrontational all India issue which completely cut across communal divides. Documents 1.ii: 1–5 present material on the INA issue, and the immediately following section deals with the Subhas Chandra Bose Day disturbances in Bombay on 23 January (1.iii; Docs 1–7). These are interesting particularly in the way divisive tendencies were still being contained. The clashes had been provoked by a British ban on processions through Muslim areas, and a section of the crowd had attacked the Communist Party headquarters on account of

the Party's alleged anti-national role during the 1942 movement. But the anti-Communist aspect was not highlighted at all by the *Hindustan Times* and *Free Press Journal*, two pro-Congress journals from which we give extracts. Even more striking is the near-identity of presentation in the Muslim League newspaper *Dawn*. This would become unimaginable on any issue open to communal readings within a few months.

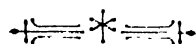
The INA trials issue came to a head in mid-February, when Calcutta witnessed a massive upsurge protesting against the sentencing of Captain Abdul Rashid. Two striking features of this upsurge were an impressive Hindu-Muslim unity on the streets, and the evident reluctance on the part of the nationalist leadership, Communist and other Left groups apart, to sustain militant action. Both aspects would become even more evident in Bombay within a few days. The Mansergh volume confines its reference to the Abdul Rashid Day demonstrations to a couple of brief notices in the Wavell-Pethick-Lawrence correspondence (Mansergh VI; 429, 442). Our collection, in deliberate contrast, includes over twenty documents, and collates extracts from archival material with newspaper accounts taken from journals with diverse political perspectives: the liberal English *Statesman*, the pro-Congress *Hindustan Times*, and *Free Press Journal*, and the Communist *People's Age* (1.v; Docs 1-22).

The saga of the Royal Indian Navy (RIN) Mutiny is truly heroic, reminiscent indeed at times at Battleship Potemkin, and very largely forgotten, some published reminiscences and Left-leaning accounts apart. Notable among these are S. Banerji, *The RIN Strike*, New Delhi, 1954, 1981; and B.C. Dutt, *Mutiny of the Innocents*, Bombay, 1971. Mansergh, once again, is inadequate, since its format of extracts from Viceroy-to-Secretary of State, Governor-to-Viceroy correspondence leaves little scope for lower level official documentation, and excludes non-official data. Our selection comprises nearly a hundred items: day-to-day military and police reports, Home Department accounts, extracts from contemporary journals, and a few comments from private papers. The section, one of the largest in the volume, is subdivided into seven parts: newspaper material on the run up to the Bombay naval strike and the Bombay events, Bombay as seen through archival sources, Karachi, Calcutta, Madras and the South, diverse immediate responses to the RIN mutiny, and the aftermath in the shape of courts-martial and continuing discontent, as seen through official and newspaper sources.

The effort to recoup British prestige and rally 'loyal' soldiers as against INA 'deserters' led to a last round of clashes during Victory day celebrations in Delhi. Direct confrontations with the government on explicitly political issues become increasingly rare in British (as distinct from Princely) India, however, from mid-March onwards. The food issue provides an excellent indicator here. 'With a deficit of 3 million tons we are faced with the probability of a widespread famine', a deeply alarmed Wavell had informed Pethick-Lawrence on 29 January. 'Certainly the conditions will be as conducive to disturbances as they well could be' (Mansergh VI; 390). In mid-February, rations were cut down to 12 ounces of cereals, worth only 1200 calories per head, Wavell privately admitted, 'while wartime London had got over 2800' (Wavell to Pethick-Lawrence, 18 February: Ibid; 1008). Our documents include accounts of one or two massive protest against the ration cut, most notably in Allahabad and Kanpur in February (1.ix; 1-2. See also Chapter V: Economy and Society), but there was nothing of the countrywide organized movement which the British had evidently feared. There were also occasional specific protests against repressive measures, students remained fairly restive, and an impressive degree of anti-British unity was still possible around the demand for release of the remaining political prisoners: the 1942 heroes, Jayaprakash Narayan and Ram Manohar Lohia, and the Bengal revolutionaries (1.xii; 1-8). Yet the decline in anti-British political tempo remains unmistakable, even before fratricidal strife became the dominant feature of the subcontinental scene from August 1946 onwards.

The most obvious explanation here would be in terms of the attitudes of the dominant political organisations. With the elections behind them, and serious negotiations at least started through the Cabinet Mission, it was fairly natural for them to try to avoid rocking the boat. The documents of Chapter I, particularly those related to the Abdul Rashid Day disturbances and the RIN strike, vividly illustrate the 'restraining role' of the national leadership. The centrality briefly acquired by the 'Army-People' issue could not have been welcome to any group having prospects of attaining

power, as Vallabhbhai Patel explained with exemplary clarity in a letter dated 1 March, '... discipline in the Army cannot be tampered with.... We will want [an] army even in free India' (Durgadas, ed., *Sardar Patel's Correspondence*, Volume IV, Ahmedabad 1977, p. 165). The Gandhi-Aruna Asaf Ali controversy over the RIN issue indicates the Mahatma's views to have been not fundamentally different (1.vi.a; Docs 22, 26-28, 30-1, 35-7). The British, incidentally, were careful to obtain Gandhi's tacit consent before announcing the ration cut in February (Abells Note, 11 February 1946, in Mansergh VI, p. 933). The documents on political organizations in Chapter II will further illustrate the changes in the nature of formal politics after March 1946. Top-level tripartite negotiations and bargaining between the British, the Congress, and the Muslim League, as often before, sharpened communal tensions, and after August 1946 the anti-British unity on the streets of the Abdul Rashid and RIN days seemed a distant and receding memory. [Ed.]



1.i ARMY AND PEOPLE

1. Role of the Armed Services During Transition to Self-Government

Letter by C.J.E. Auchinleck, Commander in Chief in India, to all Commanding Officers, Royal Indian Navy, Indian Army, and Royal Indian Air Force; New Delhi, 1 January 1946.

File No. 62/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India [National Archives of India, hereafter NAI].

*New Delhi,
1st January, 1946.*

The months ahead, when the promises of self-government made to the Indian people by His Majesty's Government are being translated into accomplished facts, will inevitably be a period of strain and upheaval. Rumours and misstatements will be heard on every side.

As citizens of a great country all servicemen have a right to have explained to them a few simple truths to give them a background against which they may see more clearly these events which will affect vitally the happiness and prosperity of themselves and their children. As a disciplined community which has learnt the virtue of cooperation the Services can exert a moderating influences out of all proportion to their actual numbers provided they retain a sane and balanced outlook.

In the attached notes five salient points are outlined. I place on every Commanding Officer the personal responsibility of seeing that these simple principles are made clear to every man under his command. The methods to be employed are left to the choice of the Commander but the more widely and freely these points are discussed and understood the more effective will be the contribution made by the Armed Forces to the well-being and prosperity of India in 1946

C.J.E. Auchinleck,
General,
Commander-in-Chief in India.

There is much talk these days about the future of India. The year 1946 will see great progress towards self-government and independence. Progress can be accepted as a fact about which there is no doubt; what is not yet clear is exactly how the change will take place, and just what form of government will replace the one that now exists.

It is an unfortunate fact, which is true all over the world, that when great political changes are in progress the various competing parties seem to be concerned only with securing victory for themselves and are not over-scrupulous as to the methods they employ to gain their ends. Wild accusations are made against their rivals, and to win over supporters the conflicting interests of the different classes of the community are emphasised and exploited.

The men of the Armed Forces have by their training learnt the virtues of discipline, moderation and impartiality as between class and class. Both as individuals and in units they can render great service to India by remaining calm and by exerting a steadying influence wherever they may be. They will play their part more effectively if five simple truths are brought home to them.

1. *Cooperation* Today, due to the improvement in communications, man is much more dependent on outside sources than at any time in the past. Many of the necessities of life come from other countries and without cooperation between countries these necessities cannot be made available to those who want them. This process of dependence one on another is always on the increase as new developments take place. The same atmosphere of dependence and cooperation can be seen in the home. A man although retaining his personal independence of thought and his

individually is dependent on the rest of his family and they on him. Again, the family prospers only with the help and cooperation of the village. The same is true at every level and so India like every other country does and will require these outside connections no matter what her status. She thus has nothing to lose and much to gain by retaining the friendship and help of the rest of the British Empire with whom she already has so many connections and with whom she has cooperated for so many years. Such a position will in no sense run counter to her independence nor to the maintenance of her individuality.

2. *Changeover* The next point on which there is likely to be confusion of thought concerns the time that it will take to complete the changeover. If we put a recruit in charge of a fast and powerful lorry, he is a danger to himself and everyone else on the road, so we train him to take over with the help and guidance of an experienced driver. The change to self-government will be as rapid as is possible, but if the pace is forced too recklessly there is bound to be confusion which will then take many years to put right.
3. *Goodwill* Servicemen are familiar with the routine of reliefs and they know that when taking over from another unit the whole process is very much simplified if there is good feeling on both sides. The same is true of the situation in India today. Those to whose hands responsibility for government will rest have many difficult problems to deal with, without unnecessarily adding to them by creating an atmosphere of suspicion and uneasiness in which goodwill and cooperation can never flourish.
4. *Tolerance* Perhaps the outstanding lesson that men in the Services learn is the way in which a unit composed of men taken from all classes and all walks of life can live in harmony so long as one simple condition is fulfilled—there must be fair and equal treatment for all. The great mass of the Indian people, North and South, high and low, want the same things, better houses, better food and a higher standard of life all round. Unfortunately in the troubled conditions following the war many of these things are short, and many problems peculiar to India have still to be solved before she can be satisfied with the progress she has made. But what is true in the service is true in the village: harmony and the will to overcome difficulties will exist only if what is available is shared equally by all. Preference given to one class can only be at the expense and suffering of another, who may eventually be driven to extreme measures to preserve their rights.
5. *The Firm Base* Lastly, the men of the Services, in common with their friends and relations, will hear and read many wild and inaccurate statements. Let them remember one simple thing: the more lurid the story, the less likely is it to be true, and the more tempting the promises given the less chance is there of their being fulfilled.

As members of the Armed Forces they are servants of the Government and not of any political party. The welfare of the people, the greatness and prosperity of India depend on their efficiency and devotion. They should therefore be what in military language is called “the Firm Base” remaining unaffected by anything which does not make for the good of India and its people.

2. Recruitment of British Officers into the Indian Civil Service and Indian Police

Extracts from a circular note made within the Home Department; 21 and 22 February, 1946.

File No. 9/46; Home (Establishments) Department, Government of India [NAI].

Home Department

A resolution on this subject is an annual feature in a session of the Council of State....

2. The following points could be made in opposing the resolution:

(1) Recruitment to the Secretary of State's Services is the responsibility of the Secretary of State. The Governor General in his discretion can make recommendations on the subject to the Secretary of State ... vide Section 244(4) of the Government of India Act, 1935. Too much stress need not, however, be laid on this point in view of the admitted fact that the Governor General in Council was consulted by the Secretary of State on the proposals for resuming recruitment.

(2) The main argument would be the undertaking given in the press communique of 13th March 1941 to 'war-service' candidates.... The Secretary of State has resumed recruitment only to war reserved vacancies and the reservation in favour of 'war service' candidates has been terminated with the end of the war. No decision has yet been taken regarding recruitment

to vacancies occurring after 1945. If there is any change in the set up of the Government of India, it is open to the future government or governments to decide either to continue in service the new European recruits in the ICS and the IP or to discharge them. Suspension of non-Indian recruitment at this stage would expose the Secretary of State to a charge of breach of faith.

(3) Stoppage of recruitment of non-Indians at this stage would also prejudice one of the important issues that should properly be settled by persons who may hereafter be interested with the duty of framing a new constitution....

(4) The Services in India have been considerably depleted because of the stoppage of recruitment during the war....

P.V.R. Rao,
Deputy Secretary,
21.2.46.

The argument in para 4 could, I think, be developed as follows. The Secretary of State must hand over a going concern. The new Government in India will have full discretion to decide not only whether they should continue to recruit British officers, but also whether they should dispense with those who are already in service. In the meantime the two major Services, already overstrained by the tasks of the war, have been seriously depleted by the cessation of recruitment and will suffer further contraction when the ban on ordinary retirement is raised at the end of 1946. It is abundantly clear, therefore, that recruitment should be resumed at the earliest practicable date. It can no doubt be argued that the resumption of recruitment should have been confined to Indians. But, if he had decided to that effect, the Secretary of State would have been anticipating decisions as to the future composition of the Services which will fall to be made by the new Government in India. It may be that the new Government will decide to retain existing British officers, even if it decides against their further recruitment. The new Government may well argue that the sudden displacement of a number of officers of varying periods of service (who cannot be immediately replaced) would place a dangerous strain on the administrative machine; that there can be no political objection to retaining them, since their control will pass from the secretary of State to the new Government in India; and that they will be a diminishing number who will disappear altogether in time, being gradually replaced by an ever-increasing recruitment of Indians. In this view the Secretary of State would have been doing no service to India if he had decided to defer making good the suspended recruitment of the war years on the old basis of recruitment. He would have failed in his duty of handing over the administrative machine in, as he sees it, the best possible condition. It is true that if the new Government in India decides to dispense with the British officers who are about to be recruited, it will be committed to the payment of certain grants to them. But, taking the broad view, this is a comparatively small sum to pay against the advantages of re-vitalising the major Services by fresh recruitment now. If the new Government decides to dispense with these officers the money spent on these grants will in a sense be wasted. But if on the other hand it is decided that these new officers may be of real use to the new India, the advantages of having absorbed them into the administrative machine at the first practicable moment will be substantial.

C.F.V. Williams,
Joint Secretary, 22.2.46

3. Burning of Civilian Houses by Members of 6th Ganjam Civil Unit

Memorandum by E.F. McInerny, District Magistrate, Chittagong, to M.O. Carter, Commissioner, Chittagong, 11 January, 1946.

File No. 7/1/46; Home (Police) Department, Government of India [NAI].

*Chittagong,
11th January 1946.*

1. The facts, as far as I have been able to ascertain them, are as follows:

On the evening of January 7th, at about dusk, two or three members of the unit, whose camp was then at the side of the Hathazari road about 3 miles north of Chittagong, went to a house in the village of Panchlais, about 6 furlongs away from their camp, and demanded that they should be allowed to have sexual intercourse with a woman. They were resisted, and perhaps assaulted, by a number of villagers, whereupon they went back to their camp (possibly leaving one of their number in the village) and returned to the house with about 12 other men and a Supervisor. The matter, it would appear, was about to be settled without further trouble when a quarrel broke out, after which some of the Ganjam men called out about 250 to 300 men from their camp (practically the entire unit), who then set fire to about 8 groups of homesteads containing 61 families and 272 people, and looted some or all of these homesteads together with two others which were not set on fire. The Military Police arrived at the place as the Ganjam men were returning to their Camp, where they were then confined.

2. The Additional Superintendent of Police, accompanied by some civil police personnel, and I went separately to the place as soon as the report was received, while you followed a little later accompanied by the Superintendent of Police, who had waited to collect reinforcements as the report suggested that the trouble might spread. The Sub-Area Commander also went to the place. When I arrived the incident was over and the Military Police had removed about 4 Chittagonian casualties. I took to Hospital an old lady with a head wound and a girl who was said to have been raped several times. A wealthy man of the locality arranged to supply a meal to the people affected, who had not had their dinner that evening.

3. 7 Chittagonian casualties have been admitted to the General (Civil) Hospital, and one of them, a man, had died. The General Hospital being full, 7 other Chittagonian casualties were sent to the Relief Hospital. The girl who was said to have been raped has so far refused to be examined even by a lady doctor. Probably about 20 Chittagonians received minor injuries. About 6 Ganjam men, I understand, were also injured.

4. Fortunately most of the burnt houses had mud walls. Their contents were however completely destroyed, including a cow and a number of goats and fowls; and the 61 families were rendered homeless.

5. On the 8th the Army began to send building materials into the area and also supplied food, rajais (in lieu of blankets) and cooking utensils. On the same day a non-official relief committee was formed and supplied kerosene, lamps and other articles.

6. On the same day a meeting was called in Chittagong Town by Mr. Rafiuddin Ahmed Siddiqui, President of the District Muslim League, and others, including a number of communists, and it was decided that the students would go on strike on the 9th and that there would be a hartal in the Town on the 10th. I was severely criticized for:

(a) Distributing a sum of no more than Rs 42 on the evening of the 7th (this was out of my own pocket, and was given by way of supplementing the funds of the wealthy man referred to in para 2, who had run out of ten-rupee notes),

(b) Not returning to the locality on the 8th (though in fact I had spent almost the whole day there),

(c) Refusing to discuss the matter with Mr Siddiqui on the morning of the 8th (in point of fact he had asked me, as I was hurrying away from a meeting of the Port Commissioners, whether relief was being arranged, expressed gratitude when I said that it was, and did not indicate that he wanted to discuss the matter further).

I mention these absurdities because they may be reported to Government, who may wish to know what the facts are. The reasons for this personal attack appear to be as follows:

Mr Siddiqui (who was recently re-elected as a Central M.L.A) is the owner of the principal brothel area in Chittagong Town, and some days ago I made a caustic remark to him on this subject.

(ii) At the Durbar on January 7th he was assigned seat No. 21 (in accordance with the Durbar list), but on his arrival he said that he should have been given seat No. 1 and refused to attend. (I did not see him on this occasion.)

7. Late in the evening on the 8th a brick was thrown through the windscreen of a Military Police vehicle, and lathi blows were aimed at a number of BOR's in another Military Police vehicle. These occurrences, which took place in the centre of the Town, fortunately did not occasion spectacular incidents. The vehicles simply drove on.

8. On the 9th the centre of the Town was put out of bounds to troops. The students went on strike, paraded the Town shouting slogans, and held a meeting. There was no disorder.

9. That evening you held a meeting, at which the leaders persisted in their proposal to hold a hartal on the 10th, but promised that there would be no disorder.

10. On the morning of the 9th, when I returned to Panchlais Village, I noticed that adequate use was not being made of the building materials supplied by the Army. The President of the Union Board, who is a wealthy Army contractor and a member of the Muslim League promised that this would be put right without delay. That afternoon it was announced in the village by beat of drum that Mr Siddiqui wanted all the people affected to go to his house in the town. Shortly after this the Additional Circle Officer arrived with a sum of money to be distributed as advance compensation at the rate of Rs 250 per family. The people came forward to receive it, but were advised by various 'outsiders' in the name of Mr Siddiqui not to accept it until decisions had been taken in the Town at a meeting to be held that evening. All but about 7 heads of families were then whisked away to Mr Siddiqui's house in transport provided for the purpose, and of those who remained only 1 accepted the money. An offer from the Friends' Ambulance Unit to establish a milk canteen in the village was rejected on the ground that this was 'Government' relief. A leading Muslim gentleman who went to the village with some cloth on the evening of the 8th was asked not to distribute it for the present. On the morning of the 10th I found that the President of the Union Board had not distributed the *chatai* [woven bamboo matting] which he had promised to distribute on the 9th, and in the afternoon of the 10th. I found a temporary shelter roofed partly with *rajais* [quilts], and was told that this was because the people had not been allowed to use the required quantity of *chatai*.

It was thus clear that an attempt was being made to hold up relief operations and to keep the devastated scene as it was for people to look at. (A Congress M.L.A (Central) from Comilla was seen taking statements there on the 9th).

11. On the morning of the 10th you discussed this matter with Mr Siddiqui, who at the meeting referred to in para. 9 had produced a man from Panchlais and complained that he had not been paid any money. By this time Mr Siddiqui appears to have realised that hold up relief operations would not really make effective League propaganda, and he readily agreed to your suggestion that he should go to the village and advise the people to accept the money. This he did, and the money was paid on the morning of the 10th, when the Friends' Ambulance Unit, I believe, succeeded in organising a milk canteen. So as to nullify any further attempt to delay the rebuilding of houses, I obtained tents from the Army and had them pitched by a Labour Unit (not from Orissa) on the afternoon of the 10th. They were very welcome to the homeless families, who appear to be quite satisfied with the steps taken to relieve their distress.

12. There was a very thorough hartal on the 10th and considerable excitement, but no disorder. Attendance in Government Offices was negligible, but I do not think the Clerks were to blame as there seems to have been a certain amount of intimidation. At a meeting held that afternoon it was announced that the hartal would terminate at dusk, when the shops did in fact re-open.

13. The offending unit has been moved to Patenga, and the Army is determined to award adequate punishment. A Court of Enquiry was convened on the 8th and is expected to report in a day or two. The Military authorities entirely realise the seriousness of the incident and have been dealing with the matter in a most sympathetic and cooperative spirit. Full compensation will of course be paid.

14. There is nothing to indicate that further trouble is likely to occur; but one of the sentiments expressed at the various meetings is that it is high time the Army departed from Chittagong, which indeed it is.

15. I understand that a non-official Committee of Enquiry has been appointed and that a meeting will be held on the 15th to consider its report.

E.F. McInerny.
District Magistrate,
Chittagong.

1 British other ranks

4. Clash Between Villagers and Pioneer Unit at Chittagong

Memorandum by M.O. Carter, Commissioner, Chittagong, to Chief Secretary, Home Department, Government of Bengal; 11 January 1946.

File No. 7/1/46; Home (Police) Department, Government of India [NAI].

Chittagong, 11th January, 1946.

There is nothing to be added to the District Magistrate's report on the facts of this unfortunate occurrence. Owing to his preoccupation with relief measures on the spot I have been dealing with the situation in the town.

There is no doubt that public feeling has been very deeply stirred by this outrage. That was quite clear from the attitude of party leaders at a meeting which I attended on the evening of the 9th I explained there at some length what action had been taken, and was being taken, by

the civil and military, and though I could not persuade the meeting to abandon the projected hartal yesterday, I think they realised that everything possible was being done.

Yesterday the situation in the town was rather tricky. The hartal was complete, and large crowds assembled all round the hill on which the Courts and Collectorate stand. The Railway and other offices were also heavily picketted. I spoke to the assembled multitude with Mr Siddique. They were not disorderly and there were no signs of bad feeling, but they persisted in their refusal to disperse. I decided in consultation with the Superintendent of Police that the best course would be to persevere in the policy of "keeping the temperature low" and that to have forced the situation by clearing the picketters with armed police would have led to serious disturbances. Fortunately, what I apprehended most of all—the possibility of clashes between crowd or processions and military police on traffic duty—were avoided.

Perhaps the most remarkable feature of the whole affair has been the deliberate attempt to sabotage our relief measures. I had to speak rather sharply to Mr Siddique about this yesterday morning, and I am glad to say that he immediately agreed to go to Panchlais village with the SDO, 'A', and persuade the people to accept the money and other relief measures. I am not quite sure what is behind this. I think that it is partly political—Mr Siddique, the recently re-elected MLA (Central) wanting to show that the League was the first to take up the public protest—and partly due to his personal animosity against the District Magistrate. It is quite likely that the Communists, who have been very busy trying to make capital out of the situation, played on his feelings. But I think that by midday yesterday he realised that he was beginning to get into deep waters, and decided that it was time for the League to withdraw. At yesterday's public meeting it was made clear that there was to be no 'programme' for today, and the situation now seems to be normal.

M.O. Carter.
Commissioner,
Chittagong Division.

5. Clash Between Villagers and 6th Ganjam Civil Labour Unit at Chittagong

Extracts from a memorandum by the Superintendent of Police, Chittagong, to the Assistant Inspector General of Police, Bengal, 2 February 1946.

File No. 7/1/46; Home (Police) Department, Government of India [NAI].

On receipt of an information at 18.25 hrs on 7.1.46, from Farak Ahmed of Panchlaish regarding a disturbance at Kalarpara by the Military, SI [Sub Inspector] S. Ahmed hastened to the spot at 19.00 hrs the same day with Military Police. He saw a large number of Military people at the spot with lathies [*lathis*] in their hands and houses set on fire in the village. On his arrival the Military people left the place.

He found two Military men Samna Dakua and Kashi Nath Bishoa lying at the spot with injuries on their persons. The former was found both hands tied [tied] at his back and the later [latter] with bleeding injuries. These two Military men were captured and detained by the villagers there. The investigating Officer also found injuries on the persons of villagers Hasmat Ali, Raju Bibi and Mamuda Khatun....

It is Kaharpara in village Panchlaish consisting of about 100 houses. 43 houses were burnt to ashes, all of them were thatched sheds. Cattle, fowls, paddy and everything was burnt. No. 6 Ganjam Unit is stationed by the western side of Hathazari Road at a distance of about half a mile to the west. Yar Ali Khan's hat [hut] is about half-a-mile to the north east. There is a tank named Padma Pukur in the village about 100 yds. to the north of the house of Badsha Mean. The water of this tank is used by the villagers for drinking purposes.

Surat Jamal, aged about 25 years wife of Badsha Mean Kahar went to Padma Pukur at about 17.00 hrs on 7.1.46, to bring water, when 4 military people came from the west and caught hold of her. She raised alarm. Villagers Kharati Mean, Muzaharal Huq, Jarip Ali, Makar Ali and Mamar Ali came and interfered when there was a struggle in which Military men Md Omar and a civilian Kharat Ali received slight injuries. After a while 60 Military people armed with lathies attacked [attacked] the villagers, when the villagers opposed them and captured Sanma Dakua and Kashi Nath Bishoa. They also assaulted some other Military people who fell back and sent for reinforcement when 400 to 500 Military people came with petrol tins, lathies and improvised torches. They first set fire to the houses of Hasmat Ali by using petrol. They poured petrol on Hasmat Ali and threw him into the fire. His wife jumped into the tank nearby with her children. Idris and Saleh Ahmed, nephews of Hasmat Ali were severally assaulted and Idris was thrown into the tank. They are still in Hospital with severe injuries. Sohag Khatun, aged about 14 years and Mahnuda Khatun aged about 16 years were forcibly taken away from the house of Hasmat Ali by some Military men. The villagers were indiscriminately assaulted and their houses burnt. The Military men also took away articles from other houses. Some villagers came and witnessed the occurrence from a distance. They did not dare to approach.

Neighbours Osi Mean, Nural Huq, Oman Alim, Kharati Mean, Abdul Jalil, Lal Mean, Hakimjan, Karim Sona, Majila Khatun, Nural Islam, Saleh Ahmed and many others supported the FIR [First Information Report] and proved the occurrence as eye-witnesses.

Hasmat Ali, Ali Hossain, Saidar Rahman, Ansar Ali, Sarpat Ali, Nur Ahmed, Serajul Huq, Nema Khan, Idris Mean, Saleh Ahmed, all of Kaharpara and Fazila Khatun, Ashaba Khatun, Asrafjan, Hakimjan and Raju Bibi were of the house of Hasmat Ali were injured. They were medically examined. All the injuries were slight and caused by blunt weapon except those of Nur Ahmed, Nema Khan and Raju Bibi which were severe. Hasmat Ali had severe burnt [burn] injuries and he succumbed [succumbed] in the Hospital next day.

Mahnuda Khatun and Sohag Khatun were found in the field about 200 yds to the east of the Military camp. Sohag Khatun stated that she was taken to the camp where she was raped by 4 Military people and was let off. She came to the field with difficulty, fell unconscious and was picked up on the following morning.

Mahnuda Khatun first admitted to have [having] been raped in the field by 5 or 6 Military people and left there, subsequently she denied it and refused to be medically examined.

A TI Parade of all the soldier[s] of the Unit was held and 91 Military men were identified....

The accused persons stated that on the date of occurrence at about 17.00 hrs Md Omar and Vinkot Narayan went to Yar Ali Khan's hat [hut] through Kaharpara when some villagers asked them not to pass by that way. In spite of this protest both of them returned by the same route from the hat [hut] and were assaulted by the villagers. They came to the Unit and reported this fact, when a party of 50 to 60 soldiers went to the village to enquire about the assailant and they also were assaulted. They could not explain how the houses were burnt and the villagers

injured. The Commanding Officer and the Officer-2nd-on-Command stated that they saw some Military people of their Unit at the spot when the houses were set on fire....

P.K. Sen.

2/2.

Superintendent of Police,
Chittagong.

1.ii INA TRIALS

1. Delhi Rally for Released INA Officers

Extracts from a news report, 'INA men to continue fight for freedom.'

Hindustan Times, 5 January 1946.

Delhi, Friday. "We have come to thank and congratulate you, the people of my country, for our release. For the first time the might of the British Government has bowed before the wishes of the Indian people and the right of the subject races to wage war for their freedom has been recognised," declared Mr Shah Nawaz amidst thunderous cheers and shouts of "Jai Hind" that were heard beyond the Red Fort, addressing a vast concourse of humanity today in the Gandhi Grounds.

The meeting that was arranged by the Delhi Provincial Congress Committee at a short notice beat all previous records of public gatherings in Delhi. According to a conservative estimate, two lakhs of people including about 20,000 women attended the meeting. The three officers of the INA, Major-General Shah Nawaz, Colonel Sahgal and Colonel Dhillon, and Mrs Dhillon were given a tremendous ovation with the shouts of *Jai Hind*, when they arrived at the meeting place....

2. Bombay Welcomes INA Prisoners' Release

Extracts from a news report, 'Bombay citizens welcome INA heroes' release.'

Free Press Journal, 7 January 1946.

Bombay, Sunday. Bombay citizens mustered strong to express their gratitude to Mr Bhulabhai Desai on his able handling of the INA defence and to express their great joy at the unconditional release of the three young patriots.

The meeting was conducted under the auspices of the Bombay Provincial Congress Committee, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel presided.

The Mayor of Bombay, Dr Jos Alban De Souza moved the following resolution: "This meeting of the citizens of Bombay heartily congratulates Sriji Bhulabhai J. Desai and expresses its grateful admiration for his very able advocacy and magnificent defence of the accused in the historic INA trial.

This meeting conveys its hearty fraternal greetings to Capt. Shah Nawaz, Capt. Sehgal, and Lt Dhillon for their unconditional restoration to liberty, after a prolonged and anxious trial, and expresses its extreme satisfaction in that these brave young patriots have already placed their services at the disposal of the nation, in its non-violent struggle for the attainment of complete independence."

... Seconding the resolution Mr S.A. Brelvi pointed out that there was one special point that needed particular attention in this case and that was that the Azad Hind Fauj and the Azad Hind Government were formed on altogether a non-communal basis. In everything they did they were united and that was an example worth emulating....

Sardar Vallabhbhai in his presidential remarks said that the Government was misled in conducting that trial and that it was really a matter of real joy to them all that better counsels prevailed at last and the Commander-in-Chief restored the three officers to liberty.

He then narrated the history of how the Defence Committee was formed during the meeting of the Working Committee at Mr Bhulabhai's residence during the last AICC session in Bombay. Immediately on receipt of information that some members of the Indian National Army, both officers and men had been brought to Red Fort, Delhi for court martial, the working committee got busy and discussed the way and means of helping the accused in their trials.

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and Mr Bhulabhai were responsible for all that has been done and it was entirely because of Mr Desai's courage and his sense of responsibility that the Working Committee took up the matter and moved the authorities in the matter....

3. INA Soldier Denounces Communalism at Hindu Mahasabha Reception

Extracts from a news report, 'Freedom only under Congress flag.'

Free Press Journal, 8 January 1946.

Bombay, Jan. 7. "We of the Azad Hind Fauj believe that freedom can be won for India only under the Congress flag. No communal organisation is fighting for freedom," was the dramatic declaration made by one Maharatta INA soldier at a public meeting held under the local Hindu Mahasabha auspices to congratulate Captain Shah Nawaz and his two colleagues.

The speaker whose every statement was cheered by the audience stated that the INA men never thought on communal lines and were asked by their beloved Netaji to be loyal to the Congress. He stated that when his batch left for the front from Singapore, Netaji gave them two gifts, namely sacrifice and hunger and they were determined to lay their lives in the cause of India's freedom.

Dr Moonje and Bhai Paramananda who addressed the meeting previously, justified the Hindustan policy....

4. Aruna Asaf Ali Spells Out Her Politics at Bombay

Extracts from a news report, 'We will organise and drive the British out.'

Free Press Journal, 15 February 1946.

Bombay, Thursday. "We will organise the four hundred millions of our countrymen to sound the death knell of British rule over India" declared Mrs Aruna Asaf Ali in her characteristic tone of uncompromising determination, addressing a spellbound audience of well over fifty thousand at the Chowpatty sands this evening.

A clarion call to the people to don the battle dress and claim every blade of corn even if Government granaries had to be raided, a stern warning to Indian capitalists plotting with their British counterparts for flooding India's markets with foreign goods, a declaration of lack

of faith in the Gandhian Constructive Programme while the Army of Occupation is still here and another famine is impending, an outright rejection of "freedom" that the "leaders" were envisaging through the assemblies and an unequivocal statement that the Congress Ministries will have no smoothsailing if they pleaded lack of power for releasing the patriots rotting in the prisons—these formed the highlights of Aruna's ninety-minute speech....

Reverting to the grave threat of an impending famine Aruna said: "Thirty-five lakh of Muslims and Hindus fell side by side in Bengal in 1943 and no Hindu or Muslim will ever forget that. People of Bombay too will be shovelled into the jaws of the same Nemesis unless they rise and implement the Quit India pledge. We will refuse to succumb to famines. Let us take an appointment with Death if needed and raid granaries that hide away hoarded grains."

Continuing Aruna warned: "Grave times are ahead of us. The leaders did not give us sufficient time in 1942 and we suffered due to inherent weaknesses. Now soothsaying will not becom [become] hopes. The leaders now imagine that the fight is over and freedom is at hand. They labour under hopes that the Socialist Government of Britain is about to transfer power to the Indian people. We do not want to quarrel with our leaders for they are revered and loved by us. But we know that we have enshrined the image of freedom in our hearts and that the British are never going to sign the death warrant of imperialism through conferences and compromise.

"Let our leaders not be annoyed at us. It is indeed an amazing proof of the sincerity of the British that even today people are shot down in Calcutta and Bombay while many more patriots are still left to rot in prison."

Mrs Asaf Ali declared bluntly, "It is not freedom that is approaching, but fresh chains of slavery. Britain is at her lowest ebb in international estimation, and they know that they are doomed unless they tighten their economic grip over India. If there is no National Government, the people of India would have to shed their blood for it.

"What is there that our 'leaders' find difficult in this to understand? Birlas and Tatas are welding new boards with Nuffields and ICI [Imperial Chemical Industries]. We are fighting for the commoner's lot and not for Capitalists' bank balances.

"If our leaders are under any illusions of 'soft' freedom, through conferences and assemblies, at least we have to prepare for the fight now on."

Disclaiming all faith in the programme of office-acceptance, Mrs Aruna observed, "Our leaders are forming ministries. When that same Tricolour which was want only attacked with lathis, tear gas and bullets, is now planted in the bonnets of Congress ministers' cars and enters the Government Secretariat over which the Union Jack flutters proudly, we will not look in that direction. We will search for the Tricolour over workers' slums and peasants' sacks [shacks]. We will be baffled if leaders say that freedom has already come. Yet who can dare burn the already ignited souls of 1942?

"We will go to ministers to recover our Jaiprakash. If they plead lack of power, we will make it impossible for them to work peacefully. We will go to workers and students and inspire them to form on our own soil an Azad Hind Fouj and a paramount Azad Hind Government. It's an uphill task, but it has got to be assailed."

Mrs Asaf Ali spoke in great gusto of emotions: "Come, Brothers and Sisters, let us transform our hearts into grimness of stone, liberate ourselves from worries of jobs, renounce personal comforts. Not a blade of corn shall be removed from the village. Nor shall the slogans of Communist Party fool anyone any more."

She openly admitted: "We have no faith in the constructive programme of Gandhiji. The wrath of national annihilation smoulders in our hearts, and seeks logical outlet. Let us declare complete boycott of British goods, and protect lakhs of our people from this new menace. That is also the lesson of Gandhiji's constructive programme. We will then foil the game of those capitalists who betrayed the country in its most crucial moment. We will organise industrial co-operatives in our villages. Congress is not anyone's preserve, but belongs to all the 40 crores of this land. We will organise our countrymen to sound the death knell of British rule over India."...

5. Aruna Outlines Shape of Coming Struggle

Extracts from a news report, 'Underground commended: capitalists condemned.'

Free Press Journal, 16 February 1946.

Bombay, Friday. Callous capitalists who parade before Gandhiji as untainted ultra-nationalists and, behind his back fill their pockets aiding Britain to crush nationalist India, received their long due 'Reward' from Mrs Aruna Asaf Ali who addressed a huge gathering at the Shivaji Park today.

Aruna refused to allow the Congress to be surrendered to these Capitalists who in 1943 coolly refused to exert their influence to secure the release of Gandhiji when Maxwell, Linlithgow and Co., anticipating the Mahatma's death, had even ordered for sandalwood log finally to finish off with him.

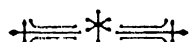
Mrs Aruna Asaf Ali held aloft the example set by the People's Parallel Government that, for whatever short period it may be, efficiently administered Satara, Midnapore and Ballia. This was the harbinger of an Azad Hind Fauj and Azad Hind Government on Indian soil itself, she said. She reiterated that freedom could never be purchased with speeches in the Assembly and talks with the rulers. The path that India had to tread was that along which the patriots of the Underground Resistance had already began their march.

The meeting was jointly organised by the Bombay Students' Congress and the Gumasta Maha Mandal, to greet Mrs Aruna Asaf Ali. Sgt. Umashanker Dixit presided, and Barrister Purushottam Tricumdas, Mr Ashok Mehta and Barrister G.G. Mehta were seated on dias. Several men of the RIAF in their uniform, were seen on the dias.

Over sixty thousand people, including thousands of women attended the meeting. Mrs Asaf Ali was profusely garlanded on behalf of the student organisations, Gumasta Maha Mandal, Bombay Forward Block and over a score of other organisations and individuals. It took several minutes to dispose of the long queue of garlanders....

Opening a broadside on the capitalists, Aruna disclosed why she had become a socialist after 1942. "If I am against, these capitalists today, it is because they forgot Gandhiji, and used their moneys and factories for the war effort.

"I personally wrote letters to every prominent industrialist to bring pressure on Linlithgow for saving Gandhiji's life, but they said that their hands were tied and refused to render any help. How long and how much can we forgive? Now the same capitalists are once again swarming round Gandhiji...."



1.iii DISTURBANCES IN BOMBAY ON SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE DAY

1. Muslims Object to S.C. Bose Day Procession Through Their Neighbourhoods

Telegram by the Special Branch, Bombay, to the Secretary of State for India, London, 24 January 1946.

File No. 5/13/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India [NAI].

Procession to celebrate Subhas Bose's birthday was permitted by Police on defined route. Route was changed to avoid passage through Muslim quarters, Muslims having shown objection to Bose's celebrations and to passage of procession. 12 hours before the time of procession leaders informed of change but declared intention to defy order. On January 23rd entrance to prohibited area barred by Police. Procession refused to go down the permitted route to destination and sat down. To clear obstruction to traffic and avoid collection of enormous crowd tear smoke was used. Second procession arrived armed with stones and heavily stoned police. Firing became necessary as tear smoke and lathi charges failed to disperse them.

Procession dispersed and reassembled on border of Muslim area and made determined attempt at entry but was held by Police. Bottles and stones thrown from roofs made firing necessary. Stoning continued till roofs were cleared by armed Police.

Later Communist office and Government grain shop attacked and sacked.

In the evening Congress Meeting on Chaupatti Sands permitted and passed off peacefully. Speakers deprecated taking out of further procession.

Serious communal clash would undoubtedly have resulted had procession been permitted to pass through Muslim quarter.

Total casualties: killed 11 injured—detained in hospital 144, discharged 261 after treatment.

Police: killed nil injured 4 officers 44 others.

One Deputy Commissioner seriously injured.

A train has been burned and some shots were also fired today. Situation not yet normal but in hand.

2. Police Open Fire as Bose Day Celebrations Turn to Riots

Telegram by the Special Branch, Bombay, to the Secretary of State for India, London; 26 January 1946.

File No. 5/13/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India [NAI].

On January 24th Hooliganism occurred on considerable scale in sections of city including stone throwing, damage to vehicles blocking of tram lines attempted burning of police Chowky. As result of police firing and lathi charges and stone throwing by crowd on January 24th, 35 persons were injured of whom 18 detained in hospital. On January 25th localised disturbances, stone throwing and sporadic looting of shops continued. Rounds fired by police on January 23rd 372, on January 24th 27, on January 25th 5. Curfew and order prohibiting assembly of more than five persons promulgated in affected area. These orders were well observed and night was peaceful. Today January 26th is so far quiet but situation still demands extreme

vigilance in view of Independence Day Celebrations which are being permitted. Mills are closed. Total casualties of all kinds so far as approximated 450 of whom 22 have died. No Departmental enquiry being held. Full facts well known to this Government and action taken has their approval.

3. Processionists Refuse to Avoid Muslim Neighbourhoods

The following undated and unsigned note is contained in File No. 24/3/46, Home (Political) Department, Government of India [NAI].

Bombay Riots

1. *General Description*

A procession to celebrate Subhas Bose's birthday on January 23rd was permitted by the police on a defined route. This route however was later changed to avoid passage through Muslim quarters owing to objections raised by Muslims. The leaders of the procession were informed 12 hours before the time fixed for the start, but they said they would defy the order. On January 23rd entrance to the prohibited area was barred by the police. The procession refused to go down the permitted route to its destination and sat down. To clear obstruction to traffic and to avoid collection of enormous crowds, tear smoke was used. A second procession arrived armed with stones and heavily stoned the police. Fire became necessary as tear smoke and lathi charges failed to disperse them. The procession dispersed and reassembled on the border of the Muslim area and made determined attempts to enter but was held off by the police. Bottles and stones were thrown from roofs and made firing necessary. The stoning continued till the roofs were cleared by armed police. A Communist office and Government grain shop were attacked and sacked.

On January 24th hooliganism occurred on a considerable scale including stone-throwing, damage to vehicles, blocking of tram lines and attempted burning of a police chawki.

On January 25th there were localised disturbances. Stone-throwing and sporadic looting of shops continued.

On the 26th January the situation was quiet except for occasional stone-throwing. The Independence Day celebrations passed off peacefully.

2. *Cause or Occasion*

Was the refusal of the processionists to follow the prescribed route.

3. *Who Organised the Affair*

The Committee called the Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose Birthday Celebration Committee. The procession was independent of official Congress celebrations and was not recognised by the Congress Party, but was led by Congress individuals.

4. *By Whom Violence or Threat of Violence was Shown*

Stone-throwing by crowds started after the procession was first dispersed by tear smoke. It is said to have been started by 700 employees of the BES&T (Bombay Electric Supply and Tramway) Company in khaki uniform. (The Secretary of their association, G.G. Mehta, was also the President of the Committee running the procession).

5. Casualties

Total casualties of all kinds up to the 26th January were about 450, of which 22 are fatal. Separate figures for police casualties are available only up to the 24th. They are given as 4 officers and 44 others injured (one officer seriously).

6. Whether the Military were Used or Stood By

Troops stood by on the 23rd but stood down the same evening and were not used.

7. Amount of Firing by Police and Military

Police. It is impossible to give the number of occasions on which the police fired as they have not been tabulated. A number of incidents are described but they are apparently not exhaustive. The reports do however give the number of rounds fired on each date which are as follows:

23rd Jan.

Revolver = 186.

Rifle or musket = 184.

24th Jan.

Revolver = 5.

Rifle or musket = 22.

25th Jan.

Revolver = 3.

Rifle or musket = 11.

26th Jan.

Revolver	}	= 1 (unspecified)
Rifle or musket		

Military. Nil.

8. Use of Tear Smoke

The reports mention five occasions on which tear smoke was used to disperse mobs but it is not clear if this is exhaustive.

General. The Bombay Government have said that no departmental enquiry is being held, as the full facts are well known to them and the action taken has their approval.

4. S.C. Bose Day Disturbances: *Hindustan Times* Report

News report, '10 killed in police firing in Bombay.'

Hindustan Times, 24 January 1946.

Bombay, Jan. 23. Ten people are unofficially estimated to have been killed when the police opened fire several times in various localities during the Subhas Day Celebrations in Bombay.

There were also several lathi charges and tear-gas attacks. The day's total casualties number nearly 500, of whom more than 70 have received bullet wounds.

The disturbances continued throughout the day and after it was thought that quiet had been completely restored, there was recrudescence of trouble at Golpitha about midnight when the police opened fire again.

The trouble started when in pursuance of the Subhas Bose Birthday Celebrations Committee a procession was formed at Chaupatty and headed along Sandhurst Road for Bhendy Bazar.

The Committee had decided to take out a procession through various parts of the city including Muslim areas.

The Police Commissioner who issued a ban on Tuesday night against the procession going through Bhendy Bazar and other Muslim localities, stopped the procession at the junction of Sandhurst Road and Vithalbhai Patel Road at Prarthana Samaj and asked the processionists to divert their route and proceed along Vithalbhai Patel Road. The processionists refused to change their course and thereupon the Police drew up a cordon and prevented further progress of the procession along Sandhurst Road.

Tear Gas Used

The processionists immediately squatted on the ground with the large portrait of Subhas Chandra Bose and refused to move unless they were permitted to proceed along Sandhurst Road, Mohmedali Road, etc. After some arguments between the leaders of the procession and the Police Commissioner, the latter gave the processionists five minutes to disperse. On the processionists having failed to comply with the orders of the Police, the Commissioner ordered the Police force to disperse the procession by using tear gas.

Following the use of tear gas, the main body of the procession dispersed in confusion and this was the signal for stones being hurled at the Police from adjoining buildings and gullies. The Police, finding the situation getting serious, used lathis and dispersed the crowd that had collected all around.

A batch of about 30 women, who formed the rearguard of the procession and who carried the portrait of Netaji Subhas Bose, continued to squat on the road despite the repeated use of tear gas by the Police. Residents of buildings on either side of the road poured bucketfuls of water on the women processionists and thus enabled them to get over the effects of tear gas salvos.

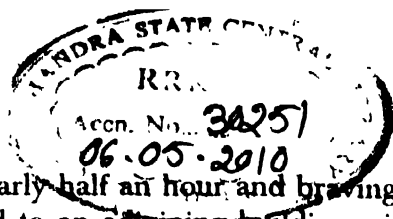
While this was in progress a band of Indonesians numbering 300 marched in a procession from the Chaupatty end of the road to join the main procession which by this time had been dispersed. The Police cordoned them off and allowed them to march along a prescribed route.

The procession which was broken up by the use of tear gas was reformed, and the Police party which had retired for a brief time, swooped on the scene suddenly with a fresh tear-gas squad and fired another salvo of tear gas. This time the tear gas was not aimed at the particular spot but was aimed in all directions, presumably with the object of driving away the large crowd which was watching the *tamasha* and cheering the processionists.

The crowd got further excited and once again started throwing stones at the police. A further lathi charge was ordered by the Police and this time the lathi Police chased the crowds into the gullies and by-lanes.

Mr Abidali Jafferbhoy, former Secretary of the Congress and a Labour leader, arrived on the scene and started arguments with the Police with a view to seeing if the Police could be persuaded to allow the processionists to go along their original route. The Police Commissioner made it clear that he had no objection to the procession going along Vithalbhai Patel Road. Bhuleshwar, C.P. Tank, Kalbadevi Road, etc. but he could not allow the procession to go along Muslim localities as a breach of the peace of the city was apprehended. Mr Abidali was later arrested.

The tug of war between the processionists and the Police continued for nearly an hour and the entire locality was seething with excitement. After a while it became a game of hide and seek, between the Police on one side seeking out the demonstrators and the crowd which split into groups and started making its appearance on different ends of the wide area in which the police cordon had been drawn up.



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After squatting on the road for nearly half an hour and braving the tear-gas salvos, the band of women demonstrators retired to an adjoining building with the portrait of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose.

Revolver Shots in Air

The Police opened revolver fire near Prarthana Samaj where knots of demonstrators continued to harass the Police, and stone-throwing on the mobile Police force continued.

As far as is known, one Police officer travelling with a mobile police force, fired three revolver shots in the air to frighten the demonstrators. No report has so far been received of any one being injured as a result of the firing. A number of mobile police parties are now combing out the by-lanes and gullies with a view to chasing away the demonstrators.

The Bombay Provincial Congress Committee which celebrated Netaji's birthday today separately with a different programme, held a Flag salutation at the Congress House this morning. Mr Nagindas Master, President of the Bombay Provincial Congress Committee, unfurling the Tricolour paid glowing tributes to the courage, conviction and self-sacrifice of Netaji Bose.

Government 'Communique'

"At 5 p.m. the list of casualties was 51 suffering from bullet wounds, 170 treated in hospitals and allowed to go home, and two police officers and 24 constables injured," says a *communique* issued by the Director of Information, Bombay Government, giving the official version of today's disturbances.

The *communique* adds: "Mr P. Wilkins, Deputy Commissioner of Police, was seriously injured by a soda-water bottle flung from the top of a building.

"The position at 5 p.m. was that strong forces of police has been drafted into the disturbed area and the situation was under control."

Use of Tear Smoke

The *communique* continues: "The refusal of 'the Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose birthday' procession to follow the route laid down by the Police Commissioner led to heavy stone-throwing at the police in Bombay city on Wednesday. Failing to stop these attacks by 'the use of tear smoke and lathi charges, the police were forced to open fire several times.' "

5. S.C. Bose Day Disturbances: *Dawn* Report

Extracts from *Dawn*, 24 January 1946, appended to File No. 24/3/46, Home (Political) Department, Government of India [NAI].

Ten persons were killed and over 70 hit by bullets when the Bombay City Police opened fire near Prarthana Samaj and Nulbazar Area to disperse a large procession taken out in celebration of Subhas Bose's birthday on Wednesday morning according to an unofficial report, says API [Associated Press of India]. In the latter area alone 150 rounds were fired by the police.

Among those killed was a 70-year-old man who was hit by a bullet in his room on the third floor of a building in the disturbed area.

More than 450 persons were also injured as the result of lathi charges by the police....

In pursuance of the decision of the Subhas Chandra Bose Birthday Celebrations Committee to take out a procession on Wednesday morning from Choupatty sands through the various

parts of the city including Muslim areas, a large procession was formed at Chaupatti and it wended its way along Sandhurst Road towards Bhendybazar.

Police Ban Unheeded

The Police Commissioner, who had issued a ban on Tuesday night against the procession going through Bhendybazar and other Muslim localities, stopped the procession at the junction of Sandhurst Road and Vithalbhai Patel Road at Prarthana Samaj and asked the processionists to divert their route and proceed along Vithalbhai Patel Road.

The processionists refused to change their course and thereupon, the police drew up a cordon and prevented the further progress of the procession along Sandhurst Road.

The processionists immediately squatted on the ground and refused to move unless they were permitted to proceed along Sandhurst Road, Mohammad Ali Road, etc.

After some arguments between the leaders of the procession and the Police Commissioner, Mr Butler, the latter gave the processionists five minutes to disperse. On the processionists having failed to comply with the orders of the police the Commissioner ordered the police to disperse the procession by using tear gas.

Indonesians Join

While this was in progress, a band of Indonesians numbering about 300 marched in procession from the Choupatti end of the road to join the main procession, which by this time had been dispersed. The police cordoned them off and allowed them to march along a prescribed route.

The procession which was broken up by the use of tear gas, reformed and the police party which had retired for a brief time swooped on the sense suddenly with a fresh tear gas squad and fired another salvo of tear gas.

This time the tear gas was not aimed at any particular spot, but was aimed in all directions presumably with the object of driving away the large crowd, which was watching the 'tamasha' and cheering the processionists.

Women Injured

The casualties till 2 p.m. were three persons injured in police firing, 13 persons injured as a result of police lathi charges, over 100 persons suffering from the effects of tear gas.

Among these are four women who are reported to have sustained slight burns....

6. Second Day of Bose Day Clashes in Bombay

Extracts from a news report, 'Repeated police firings in Bombay for the second day.'

Free Press Journal, 25 January 1946.

Bombay, Thursday. Police firing and lathi charges continued today for the second day in succession.

Complete hartal was observed by all principal markets and schools and colleges as a mark of protest against police terrorism. The Municipal Corporation joined hands in the protest along with other representative bodies in city.

The trouble today shifted to the Girgaum and Kalbadevi localities. Police opened fire several times in the Girgaum area.

Lathi charges and tear gas attacks were resorted to frequently. According to the information gathered and rechecked at various city hospitals, where victims of the disturbances and police terrorism are treated, 16 persons have died after admission in the hospitals. This includes one Parsi boy who died at the J.J. Hospital and 3 others who expired at the G.T. Hospital today.

Police opened fire on a crowd which had broken open a Government Grain shop at Hanuman Lane. One man died on the spot and another person was injured as a result of this firing.

In all, 50 persons were admitted today in various hospitals, 27 of them having suffered bullet injuries. Congress leaders accompanied by Lt Dhillon were patrolling the troubled areas persuading the crowds to refrain from violence and incendiarism and be disciplined.

The trouble commenced today in the Girgaum area from where a big funeral procession of the man who had died in yesterday's firing was being taken out by thousands of people. The procession was accompanied by a police force. Near Mugbhat Lane, it is reported that stones were pelted at the police. Armed police were immediately summoned and posted at strategic points.

Between 2 and 6 p.m. police opened fire several times in the area between Mugbhat Lane and Kandawadi on one hand and Opera House on the other. Anti-social elements became more active in the Girgaum and Kalbadevi areas, and they put big boulders on the tram track.

Traffic Suspended

Late in the afternoon, they began to throw stones at tram cars, and the tram traffic in the Girgaum and Kalbadevi localities was brought to a standstill. Sandhurst Road area which was the initial storm-centre in the present disturbances was comparatively free from trouble today.

Two police vans parked near the Albless Baug, Charni Road, were set fire to by the mobs. Stones were also pelted at the Dhutpapeshwar Building in Girgaum in which some police people are stated to be billeted.

More Reckless Firing

Armed police rushed to the top of this high building and taking up their positions they fired from the roof down in the street....

Lt Dhillon's Appeal

The Girgaum and Vithalbhai areas this evening showed no signs of abatement. Incendiarism all along the tramway tracks was on the increase. Mr Patil and Lt Dhillon toured the affected areas appealing to the people to observe discipline and refrain from violence and incendiarism.

Thoughtless Action

While the people were beginning to remove the stones the armed police nearby under a mistaken belief that they were preparing for a fresh attack fired on them.

Three Government Grain Shops situated at Mugbhat Lane, Banam Hall Lane and Fanaswadi were attacked and looted by anti-social elements.

Lathi Charge in Mill Area

The trouble extended towards the evening to the mill area. Stones were hurled at the premises of four mills, with an ostensible purpose of closing them down. Police resorted to mild lathi

charges at four places and dispersed the crowds. It is reported that twelve persons were arrested from the mill area today.

Killed on the Spot

The situation worsened in the Kalbadevi area after 9 p.m. when the police fired on a crowd which had broken open a Government shop at Hanuman Lane and were engaged in looting. One person died on the spot while another one received serious injuries.

During the course of their rounds in the troubled areas, the car that was conveying Mr Master, Mr Patil and Lt Dhillon was hit by two bullets. Fortunately the bullets pierced through the left mudguard of Mr Master's car, leaving all the occupants safe.

Till late in the night the trouble was not brought under control....

Mr Patil's Statement

Mr S.K. Patil, general secretary of the Bombay Provincial Congress Committee, writes:

The BPCC has opened an information and relief bureau at the Congress House for giving information about those who are admitted to the hospitals and also for giving relief in the shape of medicines, fruits, milk, etc. A large number of young men offered themselves as blood donors.

To relieve the congestion in hospitals to a certain extent the BPCC is arranging to convert the Jinnah Hall into a temporary hospital for admission of not very serious cases, if it became necessary.

The BPCC once again fervently appeals to the people of Bombay to behave as disciplined citizens and not allow themselves to be exploited by rowdy unsocial elements. We have no doubt that the people of Bombay will rise to the full height of their responsibilities and save the fair name of the city by subjecting themselves to a rigorous discipline.

The Official Version

The Director of Information, Bombay, in a press communique says:

Disturbances continued in Bombay City on Wednesday night and Thursday morning, although on a reduced scale and caused mostly by the activities of rowdy elements. On Wednesday evening, a Government grain shop and the office of the Communist Party were attacked and sacked.

On Thursday morning attempts were made to hinder the passage of traffic on Girgaum Road, boulders being placed across the tramlines and a tramcar set on fire. The demonstrators collected inflammable material and lighted bonfires on the road. The police were forced to open fire. There was more trouble on the Girgaum Road this afternoon which necessitated further firing by the police. The total casualties today (Thursday) are 44 injured of which 14 are police. Twenty-seven injured have been detained in hospital.

Attempts were made to force shopkeepers to observe a hartal, gangs moving from shop to shop and using persuasion and threats to induce the shopkeepers to close. Some of these gangs went into a Muslim area to attempt to enforce the hartal there, but they were resisted by the Muslim shopkeepers and the Police had to intervene. Most of the schools and colleges in the City and a large number of shops were closed, also one or two factories, but all the Mills in the City but one were working on Thursday morning.

During the morning His Excellency the Governor of Bombay drove through the area which was the scene of yesterday's incidents and afterwards visited the J.J. and Police Hospitals to see some of the casualties.

7. Contrasting Hindu-Muslim Attitudes to Bose Day Celebrations

Extracts from an article, 'Bombay Muslim reactions to Subhas Day.'

People's Age, 3 February 1946.

On Subhas Day, Sandhurst Road in Bombay reminded one of the August days.

All shops in the Hindu area upto Golpitha were closed, beyond it in the Muslim area all were open. The same repression—tear gas, lathi-charges and even firing. But there was one clear difference. In 1942, the mass of Muslim opinion was sympathetic to the demonstrators, felt drawn towards them. Today it was severely neutral and in some cases even hostile.

Only occasionally did one hear a Muslim say, "if the Congress had come to an understanding with the League, we could have faced the Police," a thing which most Muslims said in August 1942....

Things Take Hooligan Turn

By 2 p.m., the Police cordon had been removed from Prarthana Samaj and groups of 50 or 60 formed themselves into small processions and marched to Golpitha. Hooligan elements joined in and on the way they armed themselves with sticks, bamboos, etc. torn down from the shops on the roadside.

Thus armed some processionists attempted to get beyond Golpitha and for three hours there was a battle royal between them and the police.

Muslim reactions were two-fold. Some Muslims, bitterly anti-Congress, regarded these armed processions as hostile to the Muslims and said: "If the Police were not here, we would have given a fitting reply to these fellows who come with sticks here to defy us."

But none of the Muslims supported the Police action. Many Muslims gave shelter in their buildings to the demonstrators who were chased by the Police. So strong was their anti-Police bitterness.

Reactions to Anti-Communist Attack

After the attack on our Party headquarters, the first journalists to come to the spot were editors of some Urdu papers like Mr Siddique of *Iqbal*, Raees Ahmed Jaffri of *Inquilab*, Mr Faridi of the *Khilafat* and Mr Sehbai of the *Nizam*. All were shocked to see the extent of the damage and the number of our injured comrades. All of them offered to give us any help we wanted....

l.iv INDEPENDENCE DAY, 26 JANUARY 1946

1. Celebration of 26 January 1946 as 'Independence Day'

The Congress 1946 Independence pledge is from a clipping from *Hindustan Times*, 9 January 1946. The comments that follow are by A.E. Porter, Secretary, Home Department, Government of India. Both are in File No. 3/1/46, Home (Political) Department, Government of India [NAI].

Congress Secretary's Instructions for Independence Day

Allahabad, Jan. 8. A copy of the text of the pledge that is to be administered and taken on January 26—the Independence Day—has been sent by the General Secretary of the All India

Congress Committee to all provincial Congress committees. In the course of a circular letter the General Secretary says that the pledge is to be administered either in Hindustani, the national language or in the language or languages of the province.

The General Secretary advises that the day should be celebrated with *prabhat pheries* and flag salutations in the morning and a public meeting to be held in the evening, where the pledge is to be administered. At this public meeting no speeches should be made. Only the president should explain in a few words the solemnity of the occasion and the significance of the pledge. Persons who are unable to attend the meeting owing to illness or physical disability could take their pledge in their homes individually or in groups.

Text of Pledge

The following is the full text of the pledge to be reiterated on January 26:

"We believe that it is an inalienable right of the Indian people, as of any other people, to have freedom and enjoy the fruits of their toil and have the necessities of life, so that they may have full opportunities of growth, we believe also that if any Government deprives a people of these rights and oppresses them, the people have a further right to alter it or to abolish it. The British Government in India has not only deprived the Indian people of their freedom but has based itself on the exploitation of the masses, and has ruined India economically, politically, culturally and spiritually. We believe, therefore, that India must sever the British connection and attain *Purna Swaraj* or complete independence.

"We recognize that the most effective way of gaining our freedom is not through violence. India has gained strength and self-reliance and marched a long way to *Swaraj* following peaceful and legitimate methods, and it is by adhering to these methods that our country will attain independence.

"We pledge ourselves anew to the independence of India and solemnly resolve to carry out non-violently the struggle for freedom till *Purna Swaraj* is attained.

"We believe that non-violent action in general and preparation for non-violent direct action in particular, require successful working of the constructive programme kept before the country by Gandhiji and accepted by the Congress, and in particular of khadi, communal harmony and removal of untouchability. We shall see[k] every opportunity of spreading goodwill among fellowmen without distinction of caste or creed. We shall endeavour to raise from ignorance and poverty those who have been neglected and to advance in every way the interests of those who are considered to be backward and suppressed. We know that though we are out to destroy the imperialistic system, we have no quarrel with Englishmen, whether officials or non-officials. We know that distinction between the caste Hindus and Harijans must be abolished and Hindus have to forget these distinctions in their daily conduct. Such distinctions are a bar to non-violent conduct. Though our religious path may be different, in our mutual relations we will act as children of Mother India, bound by common nationality and common political and economic interest.

"Charkha and khadi are an integral part of our constructive programme, for the resuscitation of the 700,000 villages of India and for the removal of the grinding poverty of the masses. We shall, therefore, use for our personal requirements nothing but khadi, and so far as possible, products of village handicrafts only and endeavour to make others do likewise. We shall also try to work to the best of our ability some item or items of the constructive programme.

"We pay our grateful homage to thousands of our comrades who faced grave hardships, suffered humiliations and sacrificed their lives and property in the last struggle. Their sacrifice will always remind us of the duty never to rest until we have attained our goals.

"We reaffirm the resolution passed by the All India Congress Committee on August 8, 1942. It demands the immediate withdrawal of the British power from India in the interest as much of India as of world peace and freedom for all.

"This day we pledge ourselves again to a disciplined observance of Congress principles and policies and to keep in readiness to respond to the call of the Congress for carrying on the struggle for the independence of India."

—API.

Comment by Mr A.E. Porter, Secretary, Home Department

This is the first version which I have seen of the Independence Day pledge for 1946.

2. It naturally contains a good deal that is objectionable, e.g., the assertion that the British Government has deprived India of its fundamental rights and that India has the right to abolish the Government; the 'grateful homage' to the rebels of 1942 and the reaffirmation of the 'Quit India' resolution.

3. At the same time the general tenor is unprovocative and there is nothing in the version compared with that which has previously been recited and particularly compared with the speeches which have recently been made with impunity to suggest that any action should be taken by the Central Government or proposed to Provincial Governments to suppress the recitation of the pledge.

A.E. Porter.
9.1.46.

2. London Indians Protest Rally

News report, 'Police plague London demonstration also.'

Free Press Journal, 28 January 1946.

London, Jan. 27. With police squads posted at all strategic points, the India League open-air demonstration against British policy in India and Indonesia was held in Trafalgar Square today before a crowd estimated to exceed 2000.

Congress National Flags surrounded the base of Nelson's column and speakers used the plinth as their platform.

Mr Lester Hutchinson, Member of Parliament for Rusholme, Manchester, opened the meeting by telling the crowd: "You, the representatives of the people of London, have a chance to demonstrate that you are in sympathy with the people of Java, Indo-China and India in their struggle for independence."

Indian women, in beautifully coloured saris, added a splash of colour to the meeting, the purpose of which was symbolised by a huge national savings poster on the column which read "reap the full harvest of victory."

Labour Warned

A warning to the Labour Government about repercussions that would follow the recent Bombay shootings was given by Welsh Member of Parliament, Mr William Cove: "I deplore these shootings," he said "and say to the Labour Government which I support 'if you continue to pursue imperialist policies you will be compelled to use imperialist methods.' I do not want to see the Labour Government pursuing such methods and they must either be freed by the Labour Government or suppressed by it. There is no alternative. It is time we faced the fact that we are not wanted in India. Put your backs into this job" he told the crowd which was steadily growing as the meeting progressed, "tell your members of Parliament to do their best to ensure freedom for peoples of the East."

Mr Rajani Palme Dutt, Indian Communist candidate who opposed the former Secretary of State for India at the election, welcomed members of the three fighting services who attended the demonstration. "We are not here merely in the interests of the people of India, Indonesia and Indo-China" he said "but in your interests as well. We have enough on our plates with social security schemes and reconstruction plans—to say nothing of demobilisation—without using our servicemen to interfere in struggles of other people for freedom."

1.v ABDUL RASHID DAY DEMONSTRATIONS

1. Abdul Rashid's Court-martial Upheld by Commander in Chief

Extracts from a news report, 'Capt. Rashid sentenced to seven years.'

Hindustan Times, 5 February 1946.

New Delhi, Monday. Confirming the findings of the general court martial which convicted Capt. Abdul Rashid, 14th Punjab Regiment, on five of the seven charges against him, the Commander-in-Chief has commuted the sentence of life transportation awarded by the court to rigorous imprisonment for seven years and has upheld the sentence of cashiering and forfeiture of pay and allowances and other public money due to him, says a Press 'communique.' ...

2. Abdul Rashid Day Demonstrations in Delhi

Extracts from a news report, 'Muslim hartal, meetings', by wire from Y.D. Sharma.

People's Age, 17 February 1946.

Delhi, Feb. 11. Today Delhi saw one of the biggest anti-Imperialist demonstrations of Muslims in recent years. The Provincial Muslim League and the Muslim Students' Federation gave a call to observe Monday as Captain Abdul Rashid Day to protest against his conviction and sentence of seven years imprisonment by the Commander-in-Chief.

The Communist Party, the Congress Leftist group, the Provincial Students' Federation and several other non-Muslim organisations extended their support to be observance of the day.

There has been great resentment among Muslims here since the Commander-in-Chief announced the decision on Capt. Rashid and spontaneous students' strikes in Muslim institutions took place on Thursday. Muslim students demonstrated before the Central Assembly demanding his immediate release....

Govt Condemned

There was hartal in the city; all Muslim shops were closed including meat, vegetable and fruit shops and restaurants. Many Hindus also closed their shops. All Muslim students observed hartal and some Hindu students also joined, but there was incomplete strike in the colleges because the Students' Congress declined cooperation....

3. Protests in Calcutta Against Abdul Rashid's Sentence

Extracts from a news report, 'Military called out in Calcutta.'

Statesman, 13 February 1946.

Calcutta, Feb. 12. Following another day of disturbances in the city, with the police on several occasions forced to fire on riotous mobs, the military have been called out to help in restoring order and armoured cars are tonight patrolling various parts of the city.

The decision to invoke the army's assistance for the local civil administration was reached, it is learnt, at a conference today between His Excellency the Governor, Mr R.G. Casey, and the GOC Eastern Command.

Casualty figures as a result of yesterday's and today's incidents now total eight killed and about 90 injured. Six persons lost their lives in the police firings today, while of the 90 injured 65 have gunshot wounds and the rest have been injured in lathi charges.

It was announced tonight that the city has been placed temporarily out of bounds for US troops owing to the disturbed situation. All US vehicles and personnel have been withdrawn from the streets, following yesterday's incidents in which a few American military lorries were damaged. Three US military personnel, it is learnt, were slightly injured....

First Firing

... In the afternoon a mile-long procession, in which over 1,00,000 people—Hindus and Muslims, Congressmen, Leaguers, Communists, students women—joined, paraded through the Dalhousie Square area as a protest against the sentence passed on Capt. Abdul Rashid of the INA. The processionists carried Congress, League, Communist and Khaksar flags and shouted slogans demanding the release of Capt. Rashid and other INA prisoners and urging Hindu-Muslim unity.

Starting from Wellington Square, after a mammoth public meeting held there to condemn yesterday's police lathi charges and firing, the procession was led by Mr H.S. Suhrawardy, former Minister, Bengal, and Mr Satish Chandra Das Gupta of Khadi Pratisthan, the two leaders walking arm-in-arm under Congress and League flags held aloft by volunteers....

4. Maulana Azad Denounces Calcutta Riots

Extracts from a news report, 'Maulana Azad's appeal.'

Statesman, 13 February 1946.

Calcutta, Feb. 12. Deploring the incidents that have taken place in Calcutta in the last two days, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, the Congress President, appeals to all the citizens to try their best to stop the spread of hooliganism in the city....

5. Governor Casey Issues a Stern Warning to Protestors

Extracts from a telegram by the Governor of Bengal, to the Viceroy, dated 13 February 1946.

File No. 5/22/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India [NAI].

... Protest meeting ... held this afternoon. Attendance reported in evening press as 50,000. Meeting was presided over by Suhrawardy and addressed by some Congress and Communist leaders. Following meeting very large procession was allowed to pass through Dalhousie Square (prohibited area). The passage was apparently peaceful although one Head Constable was stabbed in the back by one of processionists. As procession after passing through Dalhousie Square was going past Central Police Headquarters a police lorry returning to Headquarters with injured constable force its way through procession. This was followed by throwing of brickbats on a large scale and some tear smoke had to be used to disperse a portion of the crowd on flank of Central Police Headquarters who were attempting to damage transport vehicles parked outside by hurling [hurling] missiles. The exact cause of the worse turn taken by events soon after is not yet clearly ascertainable. The crowd appears to have split up into gangs of hooligans spreading over centre of the town including European residential area and indulging in looting shops (particularly arms dealers) and looting and setting fire to private houses, molesting peaceful citizens, etc. Soon after similar activities were commenced by breaking up of crowd previously collected throughout the day at junction of Central and Southern Calcutta who also proceeded in gangs to attack and loot private houses. Successive reports coming in indicate that area over which acts of violence were being committed was spreading rapidly.

At 6.30 I had a conference with Area Commander (General Bucher), Brigadier Gibbon, the Commissioner of Police and my relevant officers. Being ... [indecipherable] ... furnished and on advice that situation was such that it was impossible to restore and maintain order with available ... [indecipherable] ... I authorised the invocation of military assistance in aid of civil power. Three Platoons were already standing by in strategic places—North, Central and South Calcutta. A company was standing to at Fort William. A battalion of the Green Howards at Barrackpur and a battalion of ... [indecipherable] ... on outskirts....

Military have initially been given the task of clearing Chowringhee Road in Central Calcutta and its northern and southern continuation forming main lines of communication to and from the City. Liaison arrangement with police to ... [indecipherable] ... all possible assistance and information relevant to their task have been made.

At 8.15 tonight I made a short broadcast speech from Calcutta Centre of All India Radio text of which is as follows "I regret to have to tell you that Calcutta is again in a state of disturbance. Arising out of a political procession held this afternoon the situation has degenerated and has rapidly developed into an attempt to mob rule in several important parts of Calcutta. Within a very short time from the holding of the procession, unruly elements started looting shops and setting fire to buildings and transport. A number of motor lorries have been burnt—both army vehicles and lorries containing the people's food. Peaceful citizens are being molested in many parts of Calcutta. It is impossible to believe that any of the principal political parties are supporting the present state of affairs. The mob are trying to take charge—and they are not going to be allowed to take charge. The situation is such that I have asked the army to come to the assistance of the civil power in order that order may be restored in Calcutta as soon as

possible. I am speaking to you at this early stage in order that the public of Calcutta may be aware of the steps that are being taken. Peaceful citizens should keep to their houses. The police and the army will not interfere with any peaceful citizens in any way whatsoever—but they will take all necessary steps against malefactors and those who refuse to obey their orders. Keep off the streets and keep out of trouble. Both the army and the police will use the greatest possible restraint provided they are not interfered with. If the troops are impeded in their efforts to restore order and to open up the roads to normal traffic they will use their weapons. You will remember that in the course of last disturbances in late November I was extremely reluctant to ask for the assistance of the army. I am equally reluctant now but I believe that army assistance is essential in the public interest and in these circumstances I have not hesitated to invoke their aid. The lesson to be learnt—for the second time within a few months is that political processions however well intentioned prove nothing. They inevitably lead to public disturbance and casualties. I hope very much that this second costly experience will have its lesson for those responsible for the demonstrations in November and now.”

6. Governor Casey Comes Down Hard on Lawless Elements

Extracts from a telegram by the Governor of Bengal, to the Viceroy, dated 13 February 1946.

File No. 5/22/46, Home (Political) Department, Government of India [NAI].

... On the advice of Area Commander and by relevant officers I have authorised the issue of a general warning over radio and by loud-speaker vans making it clear in order to keep the streets open and to maintain safety and [indecipherable] used them [indecipherable] essential that the tactics adopted by lawless elements should be countered in the speediest and most effective way. The warning further makes it clear that police and troops have been authorised to open fire on occasions when it is found necessary to do so to prevent interference with free use of City's communications by peaceful citizens and that until order is restored no procession of any kind will be allowed in the City.

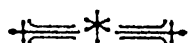
The Surgeon General visited the hospitals this morning and assures me that casualties (mostly suffering from minor injuries) totalling about 120 are being properly looked after in three main hospitals and that the staff and supplies at the hospitals are adequate.

7. Troubles Spread Out into Calcutta's Hinterland

Telegram by the Governor of Bengal, to the Viceroy, dated 13 February 1946.

File No. 5/22/46, Home (Political) Department, Government of India [NAI].

The situation in City is still fluid and shows no signs of improvement. Troops in transit through Calcutta and RAF personnel also being employed in dealing with situation. In Barrackpur area about 13 miles north of Calcutta all jute mills workers have come out on strike and situation there is reported as possibly dangerous. There have been reports of attacks on outlying railway stations by riotous mobs.



8. Governor Casey Tours Affected Areas of Calcutta

Telegram by the Governor of Bengal, to the Viceroy, dated 14 February 1946.

File No. 5/22/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India [NAI].

I toured all affected areas of Calcutta this morning with the Commissioner of Police and found all quite. Saw about dozen burnt out motor vehicles, tram depot in south Calcutta with dozen burnt out trams and considerable number of shops and [indecipherable] with broken windows. Road block debris mostly removed. Visited Methodist Church badly damaged. All Indian owned motor vehicles carry large Congress or Muslim League flags as passports. About 75 arrests have been made so far. No evidence of firearms being used by rioters during three days disturbances. Trams will not start today owing to necessity to clear tram lines of debris and by reason of state of uncertainty about the position that still exists.

9. Calcutta Counts its Casualties

Extracts from a telegram by the Governor of Bengal, to the Viceroy, dated 14 February 1946.

File No. 5/22/24, Home (Political) Department, Government of India [NAI].

Casualties so far reported. One Military officer seriously wounded two British Other Rank and two Indian Other Rank injured. Police total eighty-two injured of which twenty-two still in hospital. Civilians thirty-eight dead and 527 injured of whom 276 still in hospital.

Night thirteenth/fourteenth February quiet in Calcutta. Police and troops patrolled Calcutta throughout the night without incident. All road blocks cleared and no information of new ones created. Barrackpore and Howrah quiet. Trams and taxis still stopped. Trains running normally into Howrah and Calcutta. Above is position after breakfast but it is too early to say that whole incident is finished....

10. Troops Continue to Patrol Calcutta

Telegram by the Governor of Bengal, to the Viceroy, dated 15 February 1946.

File No. 5/22/46, Home (Political) Department, Government of India [NAI].

No further incidents in Calcutta or industrial area or elsewhere in Bengal reported during last night. I have asked troops to continue patrolling Calcutta for the present but standing pickets will be removed. Some buses and taxis working today but not trams.

11. Feelings Responsible for Calcutta

Disturbances Continue to Smoulder

Extracts from the telegram by the Governor of Bengal, to the Viceroy, dated 18 February 1946.

File No. 5/22/46, Home (Political) Department, Government of India [NAI].

I believe it can be assumed that disturbances here are finished at least for the present. The troops have now been withdrawn from city and from industrial areas. However I am told (by such widely different people as Suhrawardy and Central Intelligence Officer, Finney) that

feelings that were responsible for start of disturbances ... are still smouldering underground and that they may quite possible [possibly] break out again in future....

12. Congress, League Join Hands in Central Assembly

Extracts from a news report, 'Muslim League leaders handcuffed.'

Statesman, 14 February 1946.

New Delhi, Feb. 13. There was a sequel in the Central Assembly today to Monday's demonstrations in Delhi over Capt. Abdul Rashid when the Congress Party and the Muslim League combined to pass an adjournment motion on the arrest of Muslim League workers and the "wanton" use of handcuffs and chains by the police....

13. Jinnah Criticises British Treatment of INA Prisoners

Extracts from a news report, 'Jinnah urges inquiry into firings.'

Statesman, 18 February 1946.

Calcutta, Feb. 17. Mr M.A. Jinnah, President of the All India Muslim League, said today in a statement that "the discriminatory treatment of Abdul Rashid" would even "nullify our efforts to cooperate with the Government in the handling of the threatened food situation and other matters of importance facing the country."

Declaring that he "witnessed all along the countryside from Delhi to Calcutta blood in the eyes of the people," the Muslim leader said: "It will be folly to expect that this action of the Government will blow over like a passing storm."

Condemning the Government communique on the INA trial issued on Friday as "legally wrong, logically untenable and morally indefensible," Mr Jinnah asserted: "It is high time the Government rose to a higher plane and set right the grievous wrong which cannot be supported legally, morally and logically."

The distinction drawn in the communique between the different kinds of offences, said Mr Jinnah, "is intended merely to justify the release of Shah Nawaz and to support the untenable policy of the flagrant discrimination adopted in the case of Abdul Rashid on the plea—as if there existed any such offence known to law—of 'gross brutality' or 'uncivilized conduct'."

14. Meerut Muslims Protest Calcutta Firings

Extracts from a news report, 'Police open fire in Meerut.'

Hindustan Times, 16 February 1946.

Meerut, Feb. 15. Twenty-six persons were injured, three seriously, when the police opened fire in the city this afternoon on crowds of Muslim League, Jamiat-ul-Ulema and sympathizers who after Friday prayers at Juma Mosque had come out in a procession to protest against the Calcutta firings and demanding the release of Abdul Rashid.

The processionists carried effigies of the Viceroy and the Commander-in-Chief to which the police objected. The crowd became excited and tried to break forcibly through the cordon formed by the police whereupon the police resorted to the lathi charge. The crowds retaliated with brickbats. Finding the situation uncontrollable, Khan Sahib Shafiq, City Magistrate, ordered the police to open fire.

Twenty persons have so far been arrested....

Mr Raghukul Tilak, MLA, Mr Ram Swarup Sharma, City Congress Secretary, and other local leaders also rushed to the spot and appealed to the crowd to disperse peacefully, which the processionists obeyed. Muslim League leaders were conspicuous by their absence at the trouble spot to help restore order....

Interviewed, Mr Raghukul Tilak said that although Congressmen had not participated in the procession, the object with which it had been arranged had their full sympathy....

15. Trains Burnt in Bengal

Extracts from a news report, 'Mobs burn 2 trains in protest against Calcutta firings.'

Hindustan Times, 19 February 1946.

Dacca, Feb. 18. Two trains running between Dacca and Narayanganj on the Bengal-Assam Railway were set on fire by mobs today after they had made the passengers get down. The train service between the two stations was disorganized for three hours owing to disturbances at different points.

While hartal was being observed in Narayanganj town as a protest against the recent firing incidents in Calcutta, mobs squatted on the track staging demonstrations. A passenger train for Dacca was made to stop near Digubbur Bazar. The mob then forced the passengers to get down and set fire to the train. Another train was set on fire at Chasara after similar demonstrations.

Armed police was then drafted to bring the situation under control. The normal train service was restored after a three hour break....

16. Lahore Student Protests Against INA Convictions

Extracts from a news report, 'Governor's car stoned.'

Hindustan Times, 28 February 1946.

Lahore, Feb. 27. Thousands of students belonging to various schools and colleges of Lahore went to strike today and held demonstrations in protest against the seven years' sentence of Capt. Burhanuddin of the INA. The demonstrators demanded the release of all INA men. Batches of students, carrying flags and placards, paraded the streets shouting anti-British slogans.

On the Mall, a group of students held up the Governor's car and tore off the Union Jack from the bonnet. They threw stones at the car smashing the windscreen. The Governor and his aide were, however, not hurt by the demonstrators. The police immediately rushed to the scene and the demonstrators were dispersed....

Mr Harbhajan Singh Ahluwalia, a student leader, addressed the demonstrators in the Gol Bagh *maidan* and condemned hooliganism by some of the students who, he said, had only acted as agents provocateur^[1] in stopping the governor's car and removing the Union Jack from its bonnet....

Earlier, the students marched in groups through different localities of the town and converged at Fairfields, where Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, the Congress President, is staying. On the way they shouted Congress slogans, demanding release of INA men and the remaining political prisoners.

The students assembled on the lawns opposite the rooms occupied by Maulana Azad peacefully as the Congress President was taking rest at the moment.

Armed and lathi police were kept in readiness as a precautionary measure.

Maulana Azad administered a severe admonition to the student demonstrators who persisted for a message.

Maulana Azad told them that he very much resented the organization of demonstrations and shouting of slogans which led them nowhere but disorganized the civic life. The Maulana declared that it were the Congress leaders who were capable of giving them a lead and not that the lead should come from the students.

"I will advise you to help us instead of providing hurdles and obstacles in the way of calm and peaceful atmosphere which we want to create and maintain," he said. The methods of staging demonstrations and shouting slogans, the Congress President added, had become primitive....

17. Government Explains Captain Rashid's Sentence

Extracts from an article, 'Brutal acts cannot be condoned.'

Statesman, 16 February 1946.

The reasons why it was decided to commute the life sentences passed on Capt. Shah Nawaz and the other two accused in the first INA court martial, and award a sentence of seven years' rigorous imprisonment in the case of Capt. Abdul Rashid, are set out in a communique issued by the Government of India on Friday. "The Government is within its rights," it declares, "in condoning offences against the State, but it cannot, without undermining the very basis of social morality, condone acts flagrantly abhorrent to civilized conduct."...

"There is evidence, however, that of these men a small number have committed acts of gross brutality resulting in some cases in death upon their fellow countrymen who were prisoners of war or members of the INA. Crimes of this nature are abhorrent to all civilized people and it would be wrong for the Government to refrain from bringing to trial men against whom there is prima facie evidence that they have committed such offences...."

18. Communists-League-Congress Unite in Calcutta's Massive Demonstrations for Release of Abdul Rashid

Extracts from a news report, 'Calcutta students' demonstration grows into big tide of Hindu-Muslim, anti-imperialist unity.' By wire from Nikhil Chakrabarti.

People's Age, 24 February 1946.

Calcutta, Feb. 14. On Monday, February 11th, a meeting of Calcutta students was jointly called by the All-Bengal Muslim Students' League (ABMSL) and the Bengal Provincial Students' Federation (in which Communists and others work together) to demand the release of Capt. Abdul Rashid of the INA and other political prisoners.

A procession of Muslim school boys, on their way to the meeting, was lathi-charged by the Police at Dalhousie Square and 12 arrests were made on the spot.

This roused the indignation of all at the meeting, which was held at Wellington Square. Students, both Hindu and Muslim, protested against it.

The League leader, Mr Suhrawardy who attended the meeting spoke: "Today the great desire of my life is fulfilled, that Hindu and Muslim students have stood united under the

banners of the Congress and the Muslim League.” And he urged them to rouse the whole of Calcutta against Police brutalities.

5000 Strong March

The students then marched in a procession, 5000 strong, through different streets. It was a unique spectacle of Congress and League flags fluttering together in the hands of young boys—and Hindus and Muslims together—shouting slogans like “Police zoolum bandh karo”, “Congress League ek ho”.

The Police had made elaborate precautions and were parading the streets with teargas squads, machine-guns and lathis. They were out to provoke a clash although the students were maintaining complete discipline and peace. When they reached Dalhousie Square by Clive Street, the Police blocked the way, but the students’ pressure pushed them back.

The people of the locality, which is the centre of the business world, poured on to the streets to see the heroic students defying the Police, with the Congress and League flags in their hands. The students squatted down on the road.

Meanwhile, a fresh contingent of armed Gurkha Police appeared. At first the Police Officer approached Annada Bhattacharyya, General Secretary of the Bengal Provincial Students’ Federation, who told him that the processionists demanded the right of passage peacefully.

Annada then addressed the students and exhorted them to remain calm so that the student leaders might discuss their next plan of action.

“Go Or I’ll Smash You”—Police Attack

About this time, Mr Mohammed Osman, Secretary of the Calcutta City League, came there and while addressing the gathering and greeting Hindu-Muslim unity, a Police sergeant rushed forward and arrested him. The notorious Deputy Commissioner of Police, Shamsud-Doha, shouted at the students, “Either you go away or I will smash you.” Annada retorted amidst cheers, “You can never smash u.s.”

Thereupon 200 Policemen attacked the peaceful students for nearly one hour. Over 100 students were wounded including practically all the leaders of the Bengal Provincial Students’ Federation (BPSF) and All-Bengal Muslim Students’ League (ABMSL). Twenty were arrested.

The brutality of the Police roused great indignation all over the city and enraged crowds collected at street corners. Trams and buses were stopped in certain routes by passengers themselves and peacefully picketed by the crowd.

In two places Police indiscriminately used tear gas and also opened fire, which infuriated the people all the more. Cases of smashing up of military trucks were also reported. By midnight the whole city was burning with rage against the Police.

Congress-League Leaders Last Minute Volte Face

Meanwhile, top leaders of the Muslim League contacted the Congress and Communist leaders and after prolonged discussion a joint statement was issued condemning Police action and calling a meeting of citizens the next day at one o’clock.

But the Congress leaders refused to sign on behalf of their organisation and did so only in their individual capacity.

They wanted it to be approved by Sjt. Sarat Bose and to get his signature and so together with Lal Meah and other Muslim League leaders, they went to see Sarat Babu.

At the joint discussion it had been decided to call a hartal, which included the stoppage of all vehicular traffic. So the Communists approached the Tram and Bus Union workers for giving a call for strike. But a couple of hours past midnight, information came that at Sarat Babu's house, the Congress and League leaders had decided against the hartal.

Tricolour-League-Red Flags Mingle

The next morning, Tuesday, by 8 o'clock all vehicular traffic stopped as huge crowds picketed at street corners. Fury against military lorries continued and many were attacked. In the growing tension, peace squads of the League, Congress, Communists and students tried to pacify the people by patrolling the streets.

But Police provocation was on the increase all the time and firing was opened in North Calcutta, killing one person.

By one o'clock a huge crowd of 25,000 belonging to all sections of the people—students, workers, bhadralogs and women also—collected at Wellington Square.

It was an unforgettable scene, where scores of Tricolour, League and Red Flags mingled together. In some cases flags were found knotted to one another. And continuous shouts of "Hindu-Muslim ek ho", "Congress-League ek ho", "Down with British Imperialism" rent the sky.

Thunderous Cheers for United Struggle

The students held a meeting, over which Mr Azizur Rahman, Secretary of the ABMSL presided. Representatives of different student bodies spoke. Thunderous applause punctuated every reference to Hindu-Muslim unity and the freedom struggle. A Muslim student, Zahiruddin said: "The British Government by making discrimination against Abdul Rashid, who was defended by the League, schemed to keep Hindus and Muslims apart. We stand here united today to confound the British calculations. By settling the question of Hindustan and Pakistan ourselves, we will drive the British out by our united movement. By our blood we will wipe of this shame

When Annada in moving words narrated the previous day's incident and how young Muslim boys had braved the Police, there was spontaneous applause.

After the students' meeting, the meeting convened by the leaders met at the same place with Mr Suhrawardy in the chair, Maulana Akram Khan, President of the Bengal League spoke: "I might be old in age, but today I shall not only not lag behind, but will lead you." Abdul Hashim, Secretary of the Bengal Provincial League said: "I can clearly visualise the day, which is not far distant, when British Imperialism will crumble like a house of cards in a new Plassey or Panipat. Yesterday's tragedy has been turned from a curse to a blessing since it has brought Hindus and Muslims together. Through greater unity in the whole country we shall build our Azad Hind Fouz. Don't bother about arms. If we unite, weapons will fall from the sky."

The Communist leader, Somnath Lahiri, said: "If leaders last night took six hours to come together, it did not take six minutes for the common people, both Hindu and Muslim, to unite in the face of the Police. We ask the Congress and League leaders to take the pledge today that they will not campaign separately and against each other for the release of the Azad Hind Fouz, but will get all of them freed through a united movement."

Suhrawardy demanded enquiry into the firing, release of the arrested and the continuation of the joint campaign till all the INA men had been set free. Other leaders, belonging to the Congress, also spoke.

League-Gandhiite Leaders at the Head

After the meeting, a huge procession started with Mr Suhrawardy and Satish Das Gupta, the leader of the Gandhiites in the Bengal Congress, at the head. Many League, Communist and Congress leaders were seen in the procession.

It was a memorable event—this procession with Congress, League, Communist and Khaksar flags. As it proceeded, thousands joined it and soon it swelled to over two lakhs. Deafening cries of “Congress-League ek ho”, “Down with British Raj”, “Stop Police zoolum” drew the entire people of whole localities into the procession as it went.

Meanwhile, the Government, alarmed at such a mighty popular upsurge, withdrew the ban on entry into Dalhousie Square. But they were still out to provoke clashes. When the procession having left Dalhousie Square was passing peacefully along Bow Bazar Street, one Police lorry tried to break it into two by throwing tear gas a number of times.

This infuriated the crowd, but they kept calm, while Suhrawardy went with Satish Babu to the Governor and the Police Commissioner to protest against such provocation. They returned and the procession once again went through Dalhousie Square.

When tear gas was used by the Police, women from houses on both sides showered buckets of water to neutralise its effect.

I witnessed an interesting scene: a League volunteer soaked the green League flag in water and gave it to Satish Babu. He wiped his own face, then gave it to Suhrawardy Sahib, who after using it gave it back to Satish Babu.

Despite tear gas, the crowd behaved peacefully. When they returned to Wellington Square, both Suhrawardy and Satish Das Gupta exhorted the people to maintain peace and not to fall a prey to Police provocation.

Top Congress Leaders Remain Aloof: Result

Most conspicuous and painful throughout these otherwise inspiring incidents was the absence of Bengal's top Congress leaders. Sdys. Sarat Bose and Suren Ghose, President of the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee.

Though both of them were signatories to the joint statement calling for the meeting, both kept themselves absent on some excuse. It was most surprising to find Bengal's top Congress bosses deliberately holding themselves aloof from a demonstration, where thousands of our Muslim brothers, shoulder to shoulder with their Hindu brethren, were jointly defying the Imperialist Police.

The absence of guidance and direction from top leaders left the people to themselves all over the city. The result was that their fury took spontaneous forms of mass anger and this gave a chance to rowdy elements also to come into the picture.

Trucks were burnt by scores; trams at Kalighat were burnt; the Kalighat Post Office was raided; European shops and hotels on Chowringhee were stoned and European and Anglo-Indians were roughly handled.

The Police taking advantage of all this opened indiscriminate fire and used tear gas and lathis brutally. Casualties include more than 20 killed and over 200 injured on Tuesday.

Casey Calls in Military

Governor Casey, obviously taking advantage of the top Congress leaders' non-participation, broadcast insolently in the evening: “The lesson to be learnt for the second time within a few

months is that political processions, however well intentioned, prove nothing. They inevitably lead to public disturbances and casualties. I hope very much that this second costly experience will have its lesson for those responsible for demonstrations in November and now."

And he handed over the city to the Military.

On Wednesday, the situation continued grave with the Military taking up positions at street corners with open tommy guns and rifles and Police lorries patrolling with sergeants brandishing revolvers. Armoured cars were also seen at places. The whole attitude of the Military and Police was menacingly provocative. Firing and disturbances have been reported but the full report for Wednesday is not yet available.

Leaders in this crisis confess that the situation has gone out of their hands but for that they themselves are largely responsible. The Congress peace squads are proving ineffective because the Congress leaders are not yet energetic.

Even at this hour, they do not agree to join All-Party Squads which alone could save the situation.

Congress, League and Communist squads are, however, patrolling the streets....

19. Leadership of All Political Parties Criticised

Extracts from an article, 'Wanted new leaders to lead new movements', by Punyapriya Dasgupta.

Free Press Journal, 2 March 1946.

The recent upsurge of mass revolt has drawn from our leaders admonitory statements. They condemn excesses; they philosophise on non-violence. Some have even called a people in revolt "hooligans". But the men who rose to defy authority, and paid heavily for their actions, are of a sterner stamp. They were people led by motives and impulses akin to those which agitated the men who stormed the Bastille or started the October Revolution. The following article analyses the psychology behind the new dynamism of our people, with particular reference to the events in Calcutta last November and February....

Many leaders are in a quandary today. They do not seem to realise that the country is no more now what it was before the 9th of August 1942. If only they could feel that the present era is of mass action they would not have run into the blind alley they are now in. With their pre-August outlook, they fit in the present state of things as much as do[es] a square peg in a round hole.

On the night of November 21-22, 1945, several thousands of Calcutta students, insulted in their humble hopes and after paying in blood for a passive protest, sat through the whole of a bleak November night on a chilly road with menacing revolvers in front and a hostile neighbourhood on the flanks. Almost unanimously they waited, as was announced by speaker after speaker from school boys to legislators, for their leaders to come and help them out of the situation. It was in the option of the Leaders of course, to consent or refuse to lead; but was it in their privilege to say, as they did on several occasions after the fateful night, that only agent[s] provocateurs and hooligans clamoured for Leaders and the students should not have echoed them. We are told that only one journalist in the City of Calcutta dared come out with a straight thrust. After four months again came the students, again police and again a bloodsport. Inevitably followed another fusillade of shameless statements and now there was no journalist to comment.

Denunciators of the February unrest were stronger in number and besides the heroes of November, they had among them more distinguished claimants to public esteem.

It is true that after the police offensive several things had been done which, in ordinary times, are not commendable. But does the same standard of judgement apply in all circumstances. The country had been incited for decades to defy authority and to fight the fangs of imperialism.

On February 11, over the question of a tiny procession's access to the Dalhousie Square the Government struck. The Government must have been working under a spirit of revenge. Could an autocracy forget the humiliating confession it had to make?—"Ultimately, under severe pressure of very large crowds converging from several directions police resistance was overcome and the cordon broken. Very large crowds streamed into the prohibited area, shouting slogans and stopping traffic" (Bengal Government Press Note, November 29, 1945). Many times, in the past, inconvenient treaties had been curtly repudiated the next day and defeats had been avenged with scant respect for any standard. The Government, therefore, arrayed lathis, bullets and tear gas against a students' procession of 500. The bone of contention was the Dalhousie Square.

To the people, it was an insult to the victory wrought with the lives of forty in November. If they could take it lying down, none could plead for them a space on this earth. They had to stand up if there was any throb in their heart, any blood in their vein[s].

It would have been worthy of Leaders to lament that there were parts of the city which did not protest enough. But the leaders felt otherwise. Two big leaders said: "The incidents of the last two days have shown once more that the goonda and irresponsible elements in this city have gained the upper hand." A bigger leader said: "But it is obvious from the reports that the bad characters of the city are inflaming sentiments of young men and utilising the situation for their nefarious ends."

We admitted before and we say it again that it would have been happier if certain incidents in the unrest could be avoided. However, they took place as they did everywhere in the world and there cannot be any going back on that score. Political movements are never experiments in airtight tubes as our leaders would like them to be. The mob cannot be eliminated—they were in the Bastille, they were in the streets of Petrograd. The masses, call them mob, rabble or any other name you please: they are the people of our country and they rose with clenched fists to defend humanity's promethean legacy....

... The people made new leaders. It was not that the new leaders spurred the masses on to pulling houses down or setting trucks on fire. On scores of occasions lop-headed, crumple-clothed figures were seen on the crude barricades of Calcutta, lecturing to the 'rabble' around on the need for strength and sense, on the need for organisation. They said hardly anything which could not be said by the Leaders without harming or displeasing anybody. But the point is, Leaders could not go. They did not think of imperialist attack, mass resistance, plebeian [plebeian] grit—they were only worried about excesses....

The man who first decreed the wresting of Power by workers and peasants over one sixth of the surface of the earth—Leon Trotsky, challenges: "The young Kronstadt leaders did in the first action overreach themselves. But can you make a revolution without the help of people who overreach themselves? Indeed, does not a certain percentage of light-mindedness enter as a constituent part into all great human deeds?" Here is the outlook of a successful leader. How many leagues apart stand India's floundering guides!

20. Question in House of Commons Regarding Church Damaged during Calcutta Disturbances

Question No. 6 asked in the House of Commons, London, on 18 March 1946.

File No. 58/1/46, Home (Police) Department, Government of India [NAI].

Question No. 6, Dated 18th March 1946

Mr Sorensen: To ask the Under Secretary of State for India, if he is aware that certain Indian political leaders have suggested Indians should personally share the financial burden of restoring church property destroyed in the recent disturbances; to what extent the Indian Government or the provincial governments are responsible for restoration and repair; if the offer has been accepted; and what is the estimated cost of the damage.

Mr A. Henderson: I have seen in the Press a statement by Maulana Abul Kalam Azad that he had visited the American Episcopal Methodist Church damaged in recent disturbances in Calcutta, and had suggested to the Church Committee that the damage should be made good by contributions from the citizens, and that he is issuing instructions to local Congress Committees to raise the necessary funds. Beyond this I have no information regarding the suggestion referred to by my Hon. Friend or the estimated cost of damage to church property, but I will make enquiries. With regard to the responsibility for the cost of repair and restoration I would invite attention to the reply which I gave the Hon. Member for Cheltenham on the 4th March.

[Also included in the file is a cutting from *Times*, London 20 February 1946, of a news report, 'Burning Of U's Church In Calcutta: Damage To Be Made Good'.]

Calcutta, Feb. 19. The president of Congress, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, in a statement on the recent disturbances in Calcutta, says that perhaps the worst incident was the attack on the American Episcopal Methodist Church. He has visited the church and suggested to the church committee that the damage should be made good by contributions from the citizens. "It would serve as proof that in the India of the future the places of worship of every community will be sacred to members of every other community." Dr Azad is now issuing instructions to local Congress committees to raise the necessary funds.

The damage was considerable inside the church, the furnishing and fittings being burnt and torn down and the altar destroyed. Some damage was also done to the exterior, though not by fire.

21. Political Aspects of February Disturbances

Report by the Commissioner of Police, Calcutta, 3 April 1946.

File No. 5/22/46, Home (Political) Department, Government of India [NAI].

The Roles Played by the Different Political Parties During These Disturbances are Summarised as Follows

1. Student Organisations

Muslim League and Communist Party India students were responsible for the first procession on 11.2.46 into the prohibited area and were joined by other students' organisations, including the Bengal Provincial Students' Federation (New) and Bengal Provincial Students' Congress in the second procession. It is evident that the ultimate object of these students was to cause civil

disorder. It might be objected that there is no clear link between the second procession, that was dispersed in Clive Street at about 16.00 hours on 11.2.46, and the first incident of mob violence which occurred in Chittaranjan Avenue four hours later, in other words there is no proof that the student processionists engaged in or abetted acts of violence. In assessing responsibility one is more concerned with the net result than with the legal definitions of abetment and intention and in my opinion it may be confidently asserted that with the November disturbances as a precedent the students deliberately defied Police authority knowing that they were starting a chain reaction which would lead to civil disorder. Having started the trouble, students also participated in incidents of mob violence as is evident from the quite considerable numbers of them who were killed or injured as a result of counter-action by the Police and Military.

2. Muslim League

The Muslim League was forced into an awkward situation politically by the action of the Muslim students who defied Government on the 11th. With the elections approaching, Mr Suhrawardy could not afford to lose popular support. Like all other party leaders in Bengal he has no control over his rank and file. He knew that he had to agitate against the conviction of Abdur [Abdul] Rashid even if the agitation led to violence. He knew that the procession on the 11th through the prohibited area, declared such by the Cabinet of which he was a member, would be dispersed by force and that this would lead to serious disorders. His efforts to prevent this defiance were feeble, for he knew that his influence over students was small and that he had little hope of success. His knowledge that the procession on the 12th would be allowed to pass through the prohibited area enabled him to pose with safety as a hero of liberty and the protagonist of Hindu-Muslim or League-Congress unity. He also led the procession, undoubtedly in the hope that his presence would prevent unseemly behaviour, but undoubtedly, too, with the intention of not committing the error of Sarat Bose who lost much popularity by now showing himself at Dhurrumtolla on the 21st November. As a leader of the Muslim League he reviled the Police and criticised the Government of which he was confident he soon would be the Prime Minister. He organized peace squads during the disturbances. Had votes not been necessary perhaps the Muslim League would have attempted to take a stronger line with the Muslim students, but with no hope of success. Although the disturbances arose out of a Muslim demonstration against the Government the participants in them were probably more non-Muslim than Muslim.

3. Communist Party India

The Communist Party India was without doubt the most disruptive organisation concerned in the disturbances. The meeting at Wellington Square on 11.2.46 was organized, for the greater part by Communists and there were student supporters in both processions on 11.2.46. On 12.2.46 leading Communists instigated workers to go on strike and caused a stoppage in the Transport services and were strongly represented in all political demonstrations that took place that day. They issued objectionable posters and leaflets and wished to be much more violent than they actually were but were restrained somewhat by the Congress and Muslim League. There is reliable evidence that even after matters had been brought under control by the Police and the Military the Communist Party India leaders were considering way of prolonging the agitation. This party may always be expected to be a danger during troublous times. Its aim is violent revolution. If it remained quiet and constitutional its following would rapidly melt away and go over to the Congress or other organizations with great popular appeal. To

retain a hold on its supporters, it has to be continually attracting attention by using agitation against the Government. As it has so many low class supporters the step from agitation to mob violence is but a short one.

4. Congress

The Indian National Congress, whatever individual members may have done, took no part in the agitation immediately preceding the disturbance or in the disturbance.

Conclusion

One significant fact emerges from a study of these disturbances, namely that any small collection of individuals—they might be irresponsible students—has the power to upset completely and immediately the equilibrium of Calcutta and to cause a reign of mob violence. Among the reasons for this serious state of affairs are undoubtedly the following:

(a) Anti-Government propaganda has been so continued, persistent and un rebutted that the average man in the street really believes all that the political leaders say. As a result there is no respect for Government institutions and the tendency is growing for them to be treated with open disrespect.

(b) Parents, Masters and other persons who should be in authority over the youth of the country have lost all hold over their charges and are unable and unwilling to give them elementary instruction in discipline and courtesy.

(c) If a difference of opinion arises between the authorities responsible for discipline and the people who should be amenable to discipline, public sympathy, regardless of the facts of each case, is always given to the latter who are treated as national heroes for actions for which they should rightly be censored. This absence of a correcting influence in Indian life is gradually leading to a point where no authority is respected and if matters do not improve, chaos and disorder are the inevitable outcome of all organized activities....

I.vi RIN MUTINY

I.vi.a Disturbances in Bombay: Unofficial Perspectives

1. Indian Airmen, Not Allowed to Wear Khadi in Mess Halls, Go on Hunger Strike

News report, 'Indian airmen in city camp on hunger-strike.'

Free Press Journal, 7 January 1946.

Bombay, Wednesday. About 600 members, including officers, of the Royal Indian Air Force camp situated on Marine Drive today went on what is stated to be a hunger strike as a protest against an alleged insult by the Camp Commander.

It appears that for some time past some men of the RIAF had been going to the dining hall in civilian dress. When the Camp Commander, Flight Commander Bone, noticed the growing indiscipline in respect of dress, he ordered a notice to be put up directing strict enforcement of the rule relating to uniform. The notice, however, was missing from the notice board the next day.

Two Under Arrest

Three days ago one IOR [Indian Other Rank] who was found in civilian dress was ordered by the Camp Commander to be put under close arrest. Yesterday, February 5, another IOR was also put under close arrest under orders from the Camp Commander.

Khaddar in Mess Room

Today, it is gathered, a number of men of the Camp entered the dining hall in civilian clothes, one Indian airman was clad in Khaddar Jibba. Thereupon the Camp Commander ordered the officer in charge to put all of them under close arrest.

When they were asked to leave the hall or put on uniform, they are stated to have pointed out that British other ranks of the RAF were allowed to wear civilian dress and were not arrested, while Indian personnel were penalised for their choice of dress while not on duty or on off days.

The officer in charge, it is learnt, told the Camp Commander that batches of men appeared in civilian dress, and it was not possible to put all of the 600 men in the Camp under close arrest.

An Argument

Thereupon the Camp Commander accosted one member of the Camp and ordered him to put on uniform or clear out. It is stated there was exchange of words between the Commander and the member of the Camp. On this development all those present in the dining hall got up and centered round.

Indian Officers Defamed

The Camp Commander, it is gathered, in exercise of his authority ordered the offender to obey the rules of uniform and not to argue. He is stated to have remarked that Indian Officers were not efficient and could not maintain discipline in the Camp. This remark was taken as an insult by inmates of the Camp who decide to observe a strike.

It is understood that the whole position has been reported to the higher authorities in Bombay and Delhi and an official account of the incident is expected shortly.—API.

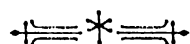
2. Indian Troops Deserting Ranks in Indonesia

Extracts from a news report, 'Hundreds of Indian soldiers desert ranks.'

Free Press Journal, 8 January 1946.

London, Jan. 7. In an exclusive interview, an American correspondent, who has just returned from Java told the *Free Press Journal* representative, "Rigid censorship prevents the world from knowing the real situation there. The British troops are very much disgusted with the dirty work of shooting Indonesian patriots and the Indian troops are deserting in hundreds.

"Many Indian soldiers told me," the journalist added, "the cause of the Indonesian is the same as that of the Indian. Therefore, they resent fighting the Indonesian people...."



3. Commander King's Racist Abuse of Indian Ratings Causes Strike

Extracts from a news report, 'Indian naval men in city on hunger strike.'

Free Press Journal, 19 February 1946.

Bombay, Monday. Over 1000 Indian ratings and men of the Signal Training Establishment HMIS "Talwar", Bombay, are on hunger-strike since this morning.

The strike is a sequel to the alleged insulting behaviour of the Commanding Officer King towards the RIN ratings who he is stated to have stigmatised as "Sons of Coolies" and "Sons of Bitches".

The authorities seemed to have taken a grave view of the situation. Immediately following the hunger-strike British RN ratings were removed from the Establishment, officers confined to Ward Rooms, WRINS girls locked up in barracks and ammunition removed from the place.

The efforts of the Flag Officer Commanding, Bombay, to end the strike proved futile, though the offending officer has been summarily transferred.

The strikers demand the intervention of National Leaders, preferably Mrs Aruna Asaf Ali....

Mrs Aruna Asaf Ali Asked to Intervene

... On February 2, one of the leading telegraphists Mr P.C. Dutta of the ship was caught writing on the walls "Jai Hind" and "Quit India" at the time of the visit of the Flag Officer Commanding RIN

Mr P.C. Dutta was put under arrest and was being examined by a court of enquiry.

A naval rating R.K. Singh has also been detained in the Arthur Road Jail for the past two months.

The Demands

The following demands are to be placed before the Commanding Officer of HMIS "Talwar" by the crew on the strike:

1. Release of all political prisoners including those of the INA.
2. Action against the Commanding Officer for ill-treatment and insulting language used against the crew.
3. Speedy demobilisation of the RIN personnel with reasonable provisions for resettlement in peacetime employment.
4. Revision of scale of pay, allowances and other facilities including travelling as obtaining in the RN Also access to the canteen stores of NAAFI.
5. Family and children's allowances as in the RIN.
6. Best class of Indian food.
7. No refund of clothing kit at the time of discharge.
8. Better treatment from officers towards subordinates.
9. Withdrawal of Indian forces from Indonesia.

British Boys Segregated

The RN Ratings who were studying in the same Signal School along with the Indian Ratings were immediately withdrawn when the situation became very grave. Throughout the day demonstrations and slogans were carried out and the "Talwar" was ringing with the shouts of "Jai Hind" and "Quit India".

Attempts were made to haul the White Ensign down and the Congress and League flags to be hoisted.

The ammunition in the Establishment was removed and all European officers were confined to the Ward Room.

Ratings continued their hunger strike and picketed throughout the Establishment not to eat.

Girls' Refusal

The WRINS were requested to cooperate but the girls refused, and were removed to their barracks.

Later in the evening the men completely dominating the situation, walked out of the Establishment to collect food for the ratings who were on strike.

Call to Mrs Aruna Asaf Ali

The FOB [Flag Officer, Bombay] again came in the evening and asked the men for their grievances so that he could convey them to the superior authorities. But all his attempts were in vain.

The Ratings demanded a National leader like Mrs Aruna Asaf Ali to intervene for them and then only they would give their demands and grievances. This was of course refused by the FOB....

Appeal for All India Strike

It is also stated that the general appeal has been made to all RIN Ships and Establishments to make the best use of this opportunity and fall in line with the Bombay strikers.

The Commanding Officer, Commander King, it is stated had used the words "Sons of Indian Coolies" and "Sons of Indian Bitches" and that was the last straw. The pent up feelings of Indian ratings burst out into a strike. The Commanding Officer King has temporarily to quiet "Talwar" and so much success for the strikers.

It is stated that the men affected by the strike number 1100.

4. Question in Council of State About Racism in Royal Indian Air Force

Extracts from a news report, 'Allegations of racial discrimination in RIAF refuted.'

Hindustan Times, 20 February 1946.

Rajya Yuveraj Dutta Singh asked in the Council of State on Tuesday whether the Government's attention had been drawn to a letter signed by Ravinder Nath Seth, former RIAF Officer, published in the *Hindustan Times* stating that he had to resign his commission as a protest against racial discrimination and colour prejudice prevailing in the RIAF.

The Commander-in-Chief, Sir Claude Auchinleck, replying said that there could be no question of racial discrimination or colour prejudice prevailing in the RIAF, as it was a wholly Indian force. The only British officers or other ranks serving with it were on attachment and were limited to the small numbers necessary to ensure its proper development.

Better Pay Impracticable

Mr Seth's letter was based on the theory that the pay and other conditions of service of the other ranks of the RIAF should be in all respects identical with those of the RAF. This

proposition, if carried to its logical conclusion, would upset the balance not only between the three Indian defence services but also with comparable civil wages and would, eventually, have the gravest repercussions....

5. Naval Strikers Fly Tricolour on RIN Vessels

Extracts from a news report, 'City naval strike spreads.'

Free Press Journal, 20 February 1946.

Bombay, Tuesday. The second day of the Indian Naval men's strike saw some 20,000 men involved in fast-spreading movement. Practically all men of the 12 Shore Establishments in Bombay area came out in sympathy with "Talwar" strikers and they were further augmented by the ratings manning some 20 odd RIN vessels in the harbour.

In the morning there were noisy demonstrations by the strikers, specially in the Fort area, marred by acts of violence. However Mr Khan of the Central Strike Committee toured throughout the city exhorting strikers to observe discipline and non-violence. By afternoon all was quiet and peaceful.

It is reported that India's Tricolour was flown on many of the RIN vessels in the harbour in place of Union Jack....

6. Aruna Asaf Ali Asks for Disciplined Strike Action

News report, 'Unity and discipline should be watchwords.'

Free Press Journal, 20 February 1946.

Mrs Aruna Asaf Ali, commenting on the Royal Indian Naval ratings strike, urges the strikers not to permit "uncoordinated and spontaneous action to mar the otherwise disciplined move they have made for the removal of the grievances."

She says: "Almost 15,000 naval ratings of the RIN units in Bombay have struck work and refused to eat canteen food since Sunday evening. Their demands are essentially legitimate.

No More Hectoring

"At least young Indians in the services are no longer prepared to submit sheepishly the hectoring and swearing of their British rulers."

Continuing, Mrs Asaf Ali says: "Unity and discipline are the first essentials of success in all collective action of this nature. They must formulate their demands precisely and conduct their struggle with dignity. Care should be taken to eschew injury to person or property in the action. The Naval ratings must conduct negotiations through their respective Ship Committees viz., the Central Naval Strike Committee.

A Word to Authorities

The Naval authorities should note that at the instance of the representatives of the strikers, I am giving them this advice. I am sure that the Congress and the Labour and the Students organisations of Bombay will extend their moral support to their legitimate demands.

It is the first occasion when such an overwhelming number of the Indian seamen have undertaken collective action with such effects. Firmness, discipline and unity on the party

[part] of the strikers and the pressure of public opinion should result in a successful conclusion of this spontaneous strike.”—API.

7. Indian Soldiers Unwilling to Mount Guard at Naval Establishments

Extracts from a news report, ‘Armed guards at naval establishments.’

Free Press Journal, 21 February 1946.

Bombay, Wednesday. The third day of the strike of the Indian Naval men in the city was quiet.

Armed military guards and police were posted at “Talwar”, “Castle Barracks” and other naval establishments which is much resented by the strikers as “unnecessary show of might”.

It is also reported that when the Indian Troops were called out to mount guard duty at the various naval establishments they showed their unwillingness to do an unpleasant job.

The President of the Central Strike Committee, Mr Khan said [called on] Vice-Admiral Godfrey and conveyed the resentment of the strikers at the armed guards.

Except for sporadic demonstrations by batches of strikers and the meeting at the oval, the day passed off peacefully, the strikers on the whole observing discipline and order....

8. RIN Strikes Spreads to Naval Headquarters, New Delhi

News report, ‘Delhi naval men fall in line with Bombay strikers.’

Free Press Journal, 21 February 1946.

New Delhi, Feb. 20. The strike fever affecting RIN men in Bombay and Calcutta has now spread to New Delhi. About 80 ratings of HMIS “India”, Naval Headquarters, mainly telegraphists and signalmen, struck work this evening. It is learnt their Commanding Officer tried to persuade them to forward their grievances through their officers and to rejoin duty immediately, but with the exception of four or five men they refused to do so.

One of the strikers told the API [Associated Press of India] that their demands were the same as those of their comrades now on strike in Bombay, namely, better food, better accommodation and immediate improvement of service conditions.—API.

9. Central Strike Committee Demands Withdrawal of Armed Guard

News report, ‘Maintain peace in face of provocation.’

Free Press Journal, 21 February 1946.

The Central Naval Strike Committee has issued the following statement to the Press:

It has been brought to the notice of the Committee that the men who are on strike in all Establishments and ships are perturbed and annoyed over the action of the authorities in calling the Indian Army personnel and Armed Police to guard and surround their barracks and ships. The Committee feels that the action of the authorities is provocative and totally unwarranted. Very naturally fears have been roused in the minds of the striking men that this is an attempt to isolate them and prevent them from having any access to food from outside, when food inside is impossible to obtain or consist[s] of things not fit for eating.

While the Committee feels that it will do everything in its power to impress upon the authorities the need to immediately withdraw the armed guards, it strongly appeals to the comrades wherever they may be—in Establishment or in ship—to maintain complete calm and solidarity and refuse to be stampeded into any kind of violent action on their part. It appeals to all comrades to remain non-violent and disciplined under the gravest provocation or even upon being done violence to.

10. Bombay Communists Call for General Strike in Support of RIN Mutiny

News report, 'City Communists call for hartal.'

Free Press Journal, 22 February 1946.

Mr G. Adhikari, Member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party, has issued the following statement:

Every Indian will condemn the brutal attempt of the alien Government to suppress with blood and iron the attempts of the man [men] of the RIN establishments in Bombay to obtain redress of their just and urgent grievances. Every Indian will resent the arrogant 'Submit or Perish' threat given by the Flag Officer Commanding to these brave men.

On behalf of the Communist Party of India, I appeal to all parties and all our people to refuse to allow this brutal suppression of our brothers in the Navy and Air Force and to observe tomorrow (Friday) a complete hartal in all shops, schools, colleges, and mills as a mark of their disapproval of Government repression and to demand immediate cessation of repression, the opening of negotiations and the satisfaction of the just demand of the strikers.

The following fraternal greetings has been sent by the Controller of Naval Accounts [CNA] staff to the Central Strike Committee of RIN ratings.

"We, the clerks of the Office of the CNA have full sympathy with the RIN ratings on strike for their just demands. As the token of our sympathy and a protest against the firing on the peaceful ratings we have gone on strike on 21st Feb. '46 from 3 p.m. and also to continue of 22nd Feb. We wish you every success in your struggle for your just demands."

11. British Call in Reinforcements to Quell Revolt

Extracts from a news report, 'All-out offensive planned to crush ratings' revolt.'

Free Press Journal, 22 February 1946.

Bombay, Thursday. Assistance of the British Navy from the East Indies has been urgently summoned to Bombay waters to deal with the serious situation resulting from the revolt of the RIN ratings in Bombay and other parts of India.

Reinforcements from the naval, military and air forces are being rushed to Bombay and Poona. The bulk of the personnel transferred is believed to be British.

Bombay itself was rocked by gunfire for well over seven hours on Thursday, the initial exchanges between the Ratings and British military personnel beginning at 8.30 in the morning.

A Truce Called

After a full day's pitched battle the Ratings did not give in but a truce was called at 4.30 p.m. and negotiations are still continuing. Vice Admiral Godfrey's broadcast on AIR [All India

Radio] in the afternoon when he threatened to raze the whole Indian Navy, if necessary did not provide the proper background for an amicable settlement.

The revolt not confined to Bombay only, serious trouble arose in Karachi, Calcutta, Madras and Delhi and in Karachi the Military Police opened fire on striking ratings.

Sardar in Communication with Delhi

Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel was in consultation with the Governor of Bombay and with Mr Asaf Ali at Delhi and the latter is reported to have had talks with the Commander-in-Chief who gave the assurance that there would be no victimisation of the personnel involved in the present strike.

Twenty Indians ship in Bombay harbour are in the control of the ratings. Among these are HMIS Narmada, the flag ship of the Royal Indian Navy and the HMIS Jumna which is reported to carry a large quantity of ammunition.

No Food

Latest reports indicate that there is no food inside the Castle Barracks and it would appear that even the ships at sea have to be supplied with fresh water and food from the barracks. Coal has also run short in the barracks, so that no cooking is possible.

It is reported that efforts are being made to remove all the ratings from the Castle Barracks to the ships at sea in the course of the night. This move is in keeping with the threat made by the men in the ships that they would open fire and even bombard the dock area if the European pickets guarding the Barracks were not removed.

Terms of Truce

As per the terms of the truce the ratings are reported to have locked up all rifles and ammunition in the barracks but they refused to hand over the key until and unless all military troops were withdrawn whether they be Indian or European.

Earlier in the morning the ratings had warned that there was going to be trouble and they had asked the dockyard workers to vacate the place. In the evening a huge procession of dockyard workers and others in sympathy with the ratings was taken out. However, the procession was stopped and diverted away from Castle Barracks when it reached the Elphinstone Circle.

Disturbances in City

Later in the night disturbances took place in the Dhobi Talao and Girgaum areas where three BEST [Bombay Electric Supply and Tramway] buses were smashed with lathis by demonstrators. A tram and a post office were also set on fire in the same area. As a result of police firing to disperse the demonstrators several people were injured and one was reported to have fallen dead.

The situation at HMIS Talwar where about 1100 ratings are on sit-down strike is very quiet.

Some of the airmen of the RIAF in the Bombay area went out on strike today in sympathy with the RIN Airmen from Andheri joined those in Marine Drive and marched through the streets in peaceful demonstration. At Marine Drive it is reported that when the police attempted to arrest the agitators they were stoned and forced to withdraw. The situation at Andheri and the Marine Drive Camps during the night was quiet.

12. Clashes Between Ratings and British Military Pickets

Extracts from a news report, 'Several ships at sea in the hands of ratings.'

Free Press Journal, 22 February 1946.

Bombay, Thursday 'The RIN ratings' strike which began on Monday last reached its climax today when the ratings in the Castle Barracks clashed with military pickets posted at the entrance.

For seven hours a pitched battle was waged between the ratings inside the barracks and the British military forces outside, when firearms including Lewis Guns, Tommy Guns, hand grenades and rifles were freely used....

13. S.K. Patil Appeals for Normalcy

News report, 'Non-violence commended to RIN men facing fire!'

Free Press Journal, 22 February 1946.

Bombay, Thursday. Mr S.K. Patil, General Secretary of the BPCC [Bombay Provincial Congress Committee] has issued the following statement in regard to the RIN strike:

The BPCC has been following with anxious concern and deepest sorrow the most unfortunate incidents which are taking place in the dock area between the Indian ratings on the one hand and the naval authorities on the other. The situation has become extremely dangerous, and unless it is brought under control, the consequences are bound to be much more disastrous than they have already been. The tension in the dock areas is no longer remaining confined to that area alone. It is fast spreading far and wide and the city of Bombay has completely gone into its grip.

They have Passed a Resolution

Some of the representatives of the Naval ratings have been in constant communication with the Congress House. We have acquainted ourselves with their version of the story.

The BPCC has already passed a resolution urging the naval authorities to redress speedily the just grievances of the naval ratings. What happened however yesterday has worsened the situation already fraught [fraught] with danger.

An Incrimination

We are told that some interested persons, wanting to take advantage of the situation or incapable of realising the consequences of their action, have asked the mills in the city to close as a part of general hartal. We are also told that some students have been going round asking schools and colleges to close today. Some of the commercial associations are also likely to remain closed, not as a result of the tension, but in honour of Kasturba's death anniversary tomorrow.

Their Experience

It is our sad experience every time, that when the atmosphere is tense the hartals or the general suspension of business accentuate the tension rather than relieve it, and they afford an excellent opportunity to hooligans and irresponsible elements to intimidate people and lead them to violence. It is easy to infuriate big crowds of people, especially when they have nothing to do. The Congress feels that it has a responsibility towards the people in a situation like this, and however unpalatable that responsibility may appear to be, it has got to be discharged.

We have all the sympathy and nothing but good will towards our Indian brethren who are made to pass through great suffering for the redress of their just grievances, but the way to express that sympathy and solidarity is not by observing hartals and adding to the tension which already exists there.

On behalf of the Congress, therefore, we have to appeal earnestly to the people of Bombay to go about their normal business as usual and give up the idea of observing any hartal today. Let us not play the game which our enemies want us to play. In a difficult situation such as this, we have got to keep our tempers cool. That alone will enable us to give more concrete help to our brethren in difficulties.

A Delicate Matter

The Congress has already got into touch with the high Government authorities both in Bombay and Delhi and we are doing our best to bring about a peaceful solution of the situation. It takes time to get results in delicate matters like this. We once again appeal to the Indian ratings who are on strike, as we have often done during the last two or three days, to observe perfect peace and discipline in their conduct and maintain an atmosphere of non-violence, in all circumstances. They are fighting against very heavy odds.

Non-violence

Non-violence alone will give them the necessary strength in their fight.

Once again we appeal to the citizens of Bombay to keep their heads cool and not to easily succumb to all manner of panicky rumours. Let everybody go about this normal business in the normal manner and it would be possible to maintain peace and discipline in the city. The Congress expects every citizen to obey these instructions and help in maintaining peace and order in the city.

The peace patrols which the BPCC has formed must be on the alert tomorrow. They must move in the localities, if need be, and use their good influence in keeping the atmosphere normal. We hope that the city will rise to a full sense of responsibility and successfully ride over the present difficulty.—API.

14. Vallabhbhai Patel Appeals for Peace

Extracts from a news report, 'Patel calls for patience.'

Free Press Journal, 22 February 1946.

Bombay, Thursday. An appeal to the Royal Indian Naval ratings to be patient and peaceful and to the people to maintain strict discipline and to do nothing to disturb the peace in the city in the present state of high tension, is made by Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel in a statement to the Associated Press of India tonight....

Congress Work

"... The primary and immediate duty of every responsible man is to see that peace is restored between the parties as also to see that the city is not plunged into trouble and its peaceful atmosphere not disturbed. Every effort should be made to prevent panic and to control the unruly elements which always are on the lookout to take advantage of such a situation. The best thing for the people to do is to go about their normal business as usual.

No Hartal

There should be no attempt to call for a hartal or stoppage of mills or closing of schools and colleges. Such a thing is not likely to help the unfortunate naval ratings in their efforts to get redress of their legitimate grievances or in the great difficulty in which they find themselves. All possible efforts are being made by the Congress to help them out of their difficulty and to see that their genuine grievances immediately redressed. The Congress has a big party in the Central Assembly and is doing its best to help them. I would, therefore, earnestly appeal to them to be patient and peaceful and also to the people to maintain strict discipline and to do nothing to disturb the peace in the city in the present state of high tension."

15. Central Strike Committee Asks for All-Party Support

Press release, 'Don't allow us to be crushed by British jackboot.'

Free Press Journal, 22 February 1946.

The Central Strike Committee of the strikers in the Indian Navy makes this earnest appeal to the leaders of the political parties in India and the Indian people.

We have all of us been in the Indian Navy for several years. During this time we have been undergoing untold hardships, low pay, bad food and the most outrageous racial discrimination. Also today, with the end of the war, the problem of demobilisation and resettlement has come for all the thousands of us.

We have innumerable times made representations, to the authorities for redressal of our grievances, particularly about racial discrimination and for equality of treatment, a demand which every self-respecting Indian patriot will completely support. But the authorities never listened.

Therefore, following the example of the brothers in the RIAF we decided to go on strike. For the last five days we have been on a peaceful disciplined organised strike.

The authorities, however, have refused to listen to us. Instead they have called up the military, particularly British troops since naturally they could not trust our Indian army brothers. They opened fire on us in Castle Barracks and forced us to take to arms to defend ourselves.

Now the Flag Officer is threatening us with total destruction, using the overwhelming armed force of the Empire.

No Indian would expect us to surrender on such humiliating terms, to bend so low before the threatening jackboot of our imperialist rulers. And we shall not surrender to threats, though we are always prepared to negotiate about our demands.

But we know too that the Flag Officer will carry out his threat unless you, our people and our respected political leaders, come to our aid.

You do not want your Indian brothers to be destroyed by British bullets. You know our demands are just, you must support us.

We appeal to you all, particularly to the leaders of the Congress, League and Communist Parties:

Use all your might to prevent a bloodbath in Bombay!

Force the Naval Authorities to stop shooting and threats and to negotiate with us!

Rally our people to support us, through a peaceful hartal and peaceful strikes!

We appeal to you, our brothers and sisters, to respond. We await your reply.

NAVAL CENTRAL STRIKE COMMITTEE

Bombay, February 21, 1946.

16. Bombay at the Barricades in Support of RIN Strikers

News report, 'Police open fire on city demonstrators.'

Free Press Journal, 22 February 1946.

Bombay, Thursday. The war-fever of this morning's battle between the British Military and the RIN ratings spread to the civilian part of the City by this afternoon, when a procession shouting "Jai Hind" and "Support the Indian Navy" marched from VT [Victoria Terminus] through Kalbadevi Road, Gulalwadi, Madhav Baug on to Girgaum Road, holding up traffic and calling upon the people to observe hartal, in resentment of the firing on the RIN rating.

On the way Ramwadi and Thakurdwar Post Offices were raided and mail bags were removed and burnt on the roads.

The police opened fire on the crowd at Ramwadi. Then the mob resorted to violence hurling stones at shops, smashing and burning trams and buses and barricading the streets.

The police opened fire again at Dhobi Talao when the crowd smashed the glass panes of the Metro and forced the show to close down. Jhaveri Bros. and Agfa Sports next to it have also been badly damaged. Seven persons with gunshot wounds have been admitted into the G.T. Hospital of whom one died on the way.

Police Open Fire

The trouble first started in the Kalbadevi locality when batches of students and workers did up traffic. Calling upon the shopkeepers to observe hartal as a resentment against the firing by the Military on the RIN ratings. At dusk, a crowd marched to the Dhobi Talao square shouting "Jai Hind", "Support our Boys in the Navy", "Subhash Bose Ki Jai".

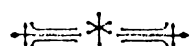
Traffic at Standstill

Traffic along the Girgaum and Kalbadevi roads was brought to a complete standstill. Two buses were burnt at Vithalbhair Patel Road and a tram car at Thakurdwar. Hack Victorias, cars and all other vehicles were refused passage through the areas. Tram tracks were dug up and bonfires lighted in them [sic]. The whole of the Dhobi Talao square and the Girgaum and Kalbadevi roads was littered with boulders, dustbins and other municipal property on the roadside.

Late in the evening an attempt was made to burn down the Ramwadi Post Office. The Fire Brigade arrived in time to nip the fire in the bud.

Armed Pickets

Armed pickets continued to guard various places in the disturbed areas. Military vehicles are patrolling most of the main streets in the city. At midnight though apparently calm prevails in these areas, the lighting of bonfires and heaping of boulders on the roads indicate that the enraged people are not in a mood to surrender to armed might.



17. Vice Admiral Godfrey Threatens Even Tougher Measures

News report, 'Admiral threatens to destroy the navy.'

Free Press Journal, 22 February 1946.

Bombay, Thursday. Vice-Admiral Godfrey, Flag Officer Commanding RIN broadcasting from Bombay Station of the AIR [All India Radio] at 2.20 p.m. today said:

In the present regrettable state of indiscipline in the Service, I have adopted this means of addressing the RIN as being the way in which I can speak to the greatest number of you at one time.

To start with every one of you must realise that the Government of India has no intention of allowing indiscipline to continue, or their actions to be influenced by such indiscipline. They will take the most stringent measures to restore discipline using the vast forces at its disposal if necessary. I ask you to bear this in mind in considering the other things which I have to say to you now.

As regards the requests made by those of you who waited on the Flag Officer, Bombay, on Tuesday, the 19th February, you may be assured that all reasonable complaints, or grievances (if any), will be fully investigated. Demobilisation will proceed strictly in accordance with age and service groups, though you must realise that this will mean that the Service will lose its trained nucleus of experienced ratings, especially in the Communication Branch.

The whole question of pay, travelling allowances and family allowances is now being examined by an inter-Service Committee. This Committee has just been afloat in one of HMI Ships and has visited establishments in Karachi, Jamnagar and Bombay. The situation in Bombay this morning both afloat and ashore is deplorable. A state of open rioting prevails in which ratings appear to have completely lost control of their senses.

In order to ensure that ratings confined to barracks did actually stay there and to avoid a recurrence of the unfortunate incidents of the day before it was necessary to place small guards of soldiers on the gates of Talwar and Castle Barracks last night.

This morning ratings from Castle Barracks burst through the guard which was forced to open fire. This fire was replied by ratings inside the barracks. The only reason for firing in the first place was to contain ratings within the barracks and not to coerce or intimidate them.

I want again to make it quite plain that the Government of India will never give in to violence. To continue the struggle is the height of folly when you take into account the overwhelming forces at the disposal of the Government at this time, and which will be used to their uttermost even if it means the destruction of the Navy of which we have been so proud.

18. Jinnah Advocates Constitutional Means to Settle RIN Strike

Extracts from a news report, 'My services at disposal of RIN.'

Free Press Journal, 22 February 1946.

Calcutta, Feb 22. The following is the text of Mr Jinnah's statement: "The press reports that the RIN strike at Bombay has taken a very serious turn and that the ratings in Calcutta and Karachi have gone on strike, have caused serious apprehensions. Newspaper reports from various parts of India, and particularly from Bombay, Karachi and Calcutta show that the RIN men have some very just grievances and it has been made clear by them how deeply they are affected by these grievances and how they genuinely feel hurt about their present position. No

civilised Government or responsible man in this country can treat their feelings and grievances lightly. I offer my services unreservedly for the cause of the RIN men to see that justice is done to them. If they will adopt constitutional, lawful and peaceful methods and appraise me fully of what will satisfy them, I give them my assurance that I shall do my best to see that their grievances are redressed.”—API.

19. Heavy Use of Firearms to Quell Bombay Riots

Extracts from a news report, ‘Demonstrators machinegunned.’

Free Press Journal, 23 February 1946.

Bombay, Friday, Over hundred killed and a thousand injured, that is the toll of Friday’s disturbances, when military rule prevailed practically throughout Bombay City. Bren guns and machine guns went into action in certain areas claiming several victims. Burning of military vehicles, post offices, police chowkies, bank furniture and looting of Government grain shops were the chief features of the day. Bren gun carriers and armoured cars were seen parading the streets. Barricades were erected at several junctions of the main thoroughfares of the city. Curfew between the hours of 9 p.m. and 6 a.m. has been proclaimed. Processions and assembly of five persons or over have been banned. Towards nightfall the city presented the appearance of a battlefield....

Detailed Account

... After Thursday night’s disturbances, the city woke up on Friday to witness the continuation of the demonstration. Troops [were] called out to help the Police, and were stationed at strategic points. The entire traffic system in the City has been paralysed and at every road junction fires are smouldering, fires of military lorries emitting the smell of rubber and petrol, fires of felt hats and tires, postal bags and bank books. Several post offices in the City have been reduced to ashes.

Storm Centres

Muslim localities which used to be comparatively quiet during previous disturbances have this time become the storm centres of popular demonstrations. Mohammad Ali Road and Ibrahim Rahimtoola roads are at [this] moment in the hands of military and only stray pedestrians are seen slinking from one side of the street to other jumping over barricades, smouldering lorries and road blocks. Tramtracks in Crawford Market, Ibrahim Rahimtoola Street, Girgaum, Dhobi Talao, Sankli Street and other areas have been completely obstructed by empty drums, blocks of stones and steel barricades.

Processions

Small processions were taken out in all parts of the city early in the morning carrying the tricolour and the League flag and small boys and labourers who formed the processions raised slogans sympathetic to the naval ratings. Demonstrations took more violent forms as the day advanced and there was a stage when every military vehicle parked anywhere was set fire to. The whole of the VT area had become a murky spot at about twelve o’clock when two huge trucks parked in Waudby Road opposite the VT were set fire to. Huge flames shot up into the sky and since the lorries must be having considerable stores of petrol and other inflammable material it was [only] after hours that each fire was completely burnt out.

Glass Panes Smashed

The situation in the Fort Area further deteriorated when a huge procession of students and labourers wended its way from Dhobi Talao towards Phirozeshah Mehta Road, an important business locality in the Fort. The processionists persuaded all shops and business houses to close down, and glass panes were indiscriminately broken. There is not a single shop or business house either in the Hornby Road or the Sir P.M. Road which has not suffered damages as a result of stone throwing. A military lorry speeding through this road knocked down two of the processionists, when people took to violence. Here the police opened fire and several rounds were used to disperse the crowd which began to set fire to military vehicles parked in front of the base office of the Royal Air Force. An American military truck parked off the Exchange Bank was among the scores of vehicles which are still smouldering in that locality. It is reported that as a result of the firing eight people were injured of whom one is a schoolboy. When the police were not able to bring the situation under control the British military were requisitioned and at present they are patrolling the streets with fixed bayonets while lorry loads of British troops are waiting at wayside junctions to come to the aid of any pressed part [of the city].

No Indian Troops

However, nowhere are Indian troops found on the street. According to some reports there is a certain amount of discontent among the Indian Army Personnel as well in connection with the Castle Barracks strike. It also surmises that there was some trouble in the Worli Barracks last night when troops set fire to some sheds.

Reports of rifle fire could be heard from bylanes adjacent to the J.J. Hospital where a considerable force of British Military personnel has taken up positions. Several fires are still raging in this locality and there are only one or two traffic thoroughfares still negotiable between the north and south of Bombay.

Every passing vehicle in the streets is being stopped by angry crowds and but for the pass word "Jai Hind" no person was allowed to proceed.

Naval lorries and other vehicles belonging to the armed forces were stoned all through the routes even by urchins who raised Congress slogans and shouted "Jai Hind" and "Hindu-Muslim" unity slogans.

Smouldering Heaps

A tramcar that had been set fire to last night near Prarthana Samaj was still burning this afternoon while in that locality all the streets are deserted and pedestrians confined themselves to the edges of the roads and eager crowds had collected in all buildings. All these areas are now under British military patrol.

But localities which are not immediately under threat of fire are still in the hands of the people and there is no end to the amount of demonstrative violence that they are exhibiting ...

Hartal

The hartal in the city has been complete and every form of activity has been suspended. In the afternoon the streets presented a desolate and forlorn appearance and but for a few pressmen and small groups of spectators here and there, only the military personnel were noticeable.

All educational institutions in the city have been deserted and all mill hands refused to turn up for work. Among the procession[ist]s students and labourers formed a large majority.

In Worli the entire village was a sea of Congress flags flying from housetops and trees, from posts and pillars.

Reds Support

The Communist Party of India have issued handbills in several languages setting out the grievances of the ratings and emphasising how it is necessary for the people to back them in their battle for preserving the honour of the nation. These handbills were widely distributed in the earlier parts of the day and groups of students and workers boarded suburban trains and raised pro-rating [*sic*] slogans and advised people to refrain from all activity and observe complete hartal.

Tram and bus traffic was completely at a standstill. However, the suburban train services both on the GIP and the BB & CI lines have not been so far affected.

At about 11.30 in the morning a procession of bus drivers and conductors in uniform marched past Flora Fountain and they joined the procession which was eventually dispersed by police firing in Pherozezshah Mehta Road.

All the markets and share bazaar were also closed for the day ...

Bloody Clashes

... The feeling among the two main communities, the Hindus and the Muslims was that they had at last united against a common foe. The Congress flag was seen fluttering in several Muslim localities....

Grainshops Looted

Nine Government grain shops have been looted or burnt down. Several shops belonging to Marwaris and wealthy merchants were raided by the mobs and their contents freely distributed to the public. At Cheera Bazar a wine shop was looted and there was a heavy rush for bottles of wine and liquor. Cloth bales from a nearby shop were also freely distributed.

GIP Strike

For the first time in the history of the GIP railway the administrative offices of VT struck work at 2 p.m. in sympathy with the RIN ratings. The strike originated from the Chief Accountant's Office and spread to all other departments. It is understood that more than three thousand clerks participated in the strike. Workers of the GIP and BB&CI workshops went on strike and joined the other labourers and mill workers.

20. Naval Ratings Surrender on Vallabhbhai Patel's Advice

Extracts from a news report, 'Naval ratings agree to surrender arms.'

Free Press Journal, 23 February 1946.

Bombay, Friday. The Royal Indian Navy ratings at Castle Barracks have decided to surrender all arms in accordance with the wishes of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel who has promised that he would do all he could to see that there would be no victimisation and that their demands would be met. The ratings, however, will continue the strike non-violently....

Assurance

The following resolution was passed by the Central Strike Committee:

On the advice [and] the intervention of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, we have decided to surrender ourselves in the hands of the Indian people.

Sardar Patel has taken the responsibility and assured us that there will be no victimisation of our comrades.

We are grateful to the citizens of Bombay and particularly our comrades-in-arms, the students, workers in docks, transport and factories for the solidarity and support they extended to our cause.

We pay our respectful homage to those brave citizens and workers who have perished or have been injured like some of our comrades at the hands of British authority for the crime of demonstrating their sympathy with our cause....

21. Congress Moderates, Its Back-Bench in Central Assembly on Question of RIN Mutiny

Extracts from a news report, 'Less than 12,000 men involved in RIN mutiny.'

Statesman, 23 February 1946.

New Delhi, Feb. 22. The Central Assembly met in a tense mood this morning and dispensed with ordinary procedure in order to take up immediately short notice questions and adjournment motions over the trouble in the RIN.

Nonofficial members showed both in word and deed that they were deeply conscious of the gravity of the situation and, expressly to avoid saying anything that might make it worse, refrained from asking supplementary questions on the War Department statement. One of the salient points in this was the answer the War Secretary, Mr Philip Mason, gave to a question whether the number of strikers exceeded 15,000. His reply was that it was rather less than 12,000.

Mr Mason began with a resume of events during the past three days and added the latest news available up to the time the House met. There were a few cries of "disgraceful" when he referred to the Bombay ratings being warned of the overwhelming force that could be brought against them, but for the most part he was listened to in silence....

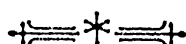
Enquiry Promised

... Remarking that this extremely serious situation could not suitably be dealt with by questions and answers, Mr Asaf Ali, Deputy Congress Leader, suggested referring it immediately to the Defence Consultative Committee, pending whose advice other action should be suspended.

Mr Mason agreed to the subject being referred to the Defence Consultative Committee, and when Prof. Ranga asked what about [disciplinary] action being stopped, Mr Asaf Ali turned to him and said emphatically: "Leave that point."

It was eventually decided to the evident distaste of several Congress back-benchers, to put off discussion of the adjournment motion until Monday. Mr Masani, in particular, expressed disagreement with Mr Asaf Ali's self-denying ordinance and wanted his own adjournment motion taken up.

In the lobbies the Congress back-benchers freely gave vent to their dissatisfaction....



22. Hindu and Muslim Joining Hands for Violence is Unholy: M.K. Gandhi

Extracts from M.K. Gandhi's 'Statement to the Press', 23 February 1946, published in *Harijan*, 3 March 1946, and reprinted in his *Collected Works*, Vol. LXXXIII (New Delhi, 1981), p. 171.

... A combination between Hindus and Muslims and others for the purpose of violent action is unholy and will lead to and probably is a preparation for mutual violence—bad for India and the world....

23. Bombay Uprising Begins to Subside

Extracts from a news report, 'Leaders urge withdrawal of the military.'
Free Press Journal, 25 February 1946.

Bombay, Sunday. Sunday marked the return of Bombay to normal. The southern part of the city was, generally speaking, calm. In the north, incidents were reported from Dadar, near the Broad-way Talkies, where the military opened fire, at Shivaji Park and at Naigam.

Normal service was resumed on the railways. The buses and trams worked from Colaba in Dhobi Talao and Crawford Market.

The Military were less in evidence than on Friday-Saturday. Along the long stretch of Mahomedali-Suparibaug Roads only the J.J. Hospital corner and the crossroads near the hospitals at Parel had pickets planted. Khodadad Circle at Dadar lower down was occupied similarly by the Military.

The barricades that had barred the main roads out of the city had all been cleared and there was little to show the conditions prevailing a bare twenty-four hours[s] earlier.

On De Lisle Road west of the railways, six British soldiers were posted in twos in the heart of the Parel area....

24. All RIAF: Bombay Units Out in Sympathy with RIN Strikers

News report, 'All RIAF units in Bombay area on strike.'
Free Press Journal, 25 February 1946.

Bombay, Sunday. All the units of the RIAF in Bombay area are on strike since the 21st instant, including the Record Office staff in sympathy with the RIN strikers. At a general body meeting held this morning they congratulated the RIN strikers on the solidarity and the brave show they have put up. The RIAF men once again affirmed their determination to keep aloft the flag raised by the RIN.

The immediate demands of the RIAF men are as follows:

(1) All the just demands of the RIN must be met by the authorities.

(2) Concrete and immediate plans to accommodate all the Service personnel after the demobilisation.

(3) Immediate withdrawal of the Armed Guards stationed at RIAF stations as all the units on strike are totally nonviolent.

(4) Immediate withdrawal of Wing Commander Mukerji from the Inter-Services Pay Relations Committee.

(5) Equality of pay, allowances and other Service conditions with the RAF.

(6) Nonofficial Inquiry, comprising of the Central Assembly members into the grievances and prevalent service conditions of the Service.

(7) Nonofficial and impartial Inquiry into the lathi charge on the RIAF men on the 21st instant at Marine Drive.

25. Many Ratings Critical of Central Strike Committee for Reaching Agreement

News report, 'No decision as yet.'

Free Press Journal, 25 February 1946.

Bombay, Saturday (3 a.m.). Considerable opposition prevails against some of the members of the Central Strike Committee who have almost come to an agreement with Sardar Patel to resume work. The representatives of twenty ships in the harbour who are not represented on the Committee feel that the leaders of the Central Committee sold the pass. They say in no circumstances could they agree to unconditional surrender. They are prepared to surrender provided Sardar Patel gives a guarantee that their demands would be met. The Admiralty at 1 a.m. this morning permitted the Central Committee leaders to invite representatives of the ship[s] to a conference on board HMIS "Talwar". It is learned that the representatives landed at the Dockyard at 2.30 a.m. and at the time of going to press are in conference considering whether to give up or continue the strike.

26. Aruna Asaf Ali Regrets M.K. Gandhi's Statement

News report, 'Peace can come only when military retire.'

Free Press Journal, 25 February 1946.

Bombay, Sunday. Mrs Aruna Asaf Ali at a Press Conference today stated that she would guarantee, despite the anti-social elements, to bring all disturbances to an end if only the British military forces were withdrawn from the City and the ban on meetings removed.

She regretted very much that Gandhiji should have called this combination of Hindus and Muslims for the purpose of violence unholy. She said that she would rather unite the Hindus and the Muslims at the barricade than on the constitutional front. This unity is more politically sound than the one based on political and other concessions. The anti-British front is the only front on which Hindu-Muslim unity, if it is to be genuine and lasting and not patched up can be achieved.

Mrs Asaf Ali added that she was unable to understand Gandhiji calling upon the RIN ratings to resign if their condition was humiliating. If they did that, they would have to give up their only means of livelihood. Moreover they were fighting for principles. If they resigned now there would be hundreds of [in] these days of unemployment to take their places, who would be subjected to the same discrimination and treatment and the RIN ratings would not have achieved anything. It simply does not lie in the mouth of Congressmen who were themselves going to the legislatures to ask the ratings to give up their jobs. It does not help the cause of the country at all.

British not Quitting

“Gandhiji further says” said Mrs Asaf Ali, “that the rulers have declared their intention to ‘quit’ in favour of Indian rule.” This statement is not borne out by facts. If the INA, Netaji Day and the present RIN disturbances are a prelude to their quitting, then it is really a grim way of giving up their rule. The way of renunciation is the way of the Sanyasi and not of the Bren Gun and the bullet. I do not think therefore that Gandhiji is justified in his belief. The people are no more interested in the ethics of violence and non-violence. They just want to resist oppression. They are no more cowards. They face bullets as they never have faced lathi charges before. They have adopted a certain amount of recklessness in their resistance. They are dying but do not complain. 1942 has given the people a new life.

27. M.K. Gandhi Rebuts Aruna Asaf Ali

Extracts from M.K. Gandhi’s ‘Statement to the Press’, 26 February 1946, published in *Harijan*, 3 March 1946, and reprinted in his *Collected Works*, Vol. LXXXIII (New Delhi, 1981), pp. 183-4.

... Aruna would “rather unite Hindus and Muslims on the barricades than on the constitution front.” Even in terms of violence, this is a misleading proposition. If the union at the barricades is honest, there must also be union at the constitutional front. Fighters do not always live at the barricades.... The barricade life has always to be followed by the constitutional. That front is not taboo for ever. Emphatically it betrays want of foresight to disbelieve British declarations and precipitate a quarrel in anticipation.... What would be lost by waiting.... The nation will gain by trusting.... It is a matter of great relief that the ratings have listened to Sardar Patel’s advice to surrender.... So far as I can see, in resorting to mutiny they were badly advised. If it was for a grievance ... they should have waited for the guidance and intervention of political leaders of their choice. If they mutinied for the freedom of India, they were doubly wrong. They could not do so without a call from a prepared revolutionary party....

28. S.A. Dange Alleges Systematic Cover-up by Government

News report, ‘It was undeclared martial law.’

Free Press Journal, 26 February 1946.

Bombay, Monday. An appeal for an open enquiry into the indiscriminate firing indulged in by the British Military on the citizens of Bombay and a challenge to fight again if the naval authorities violated any of their promises was made by Mr S.A. Dange, Member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of India at a Press Conference this evening.

Mr Dange, at the conference, alleged that there were systematic attempts being made by certain interested parties to screen the mass-shootings of innocent citizens of Bombay and to give the Government a clean bill

“The mass shooting carried on by the British Military,” he said “have already taken a toll of nearly 250 lives according to official figures themselves. This unprecedented orgy of shootings constitutes a record even for the British administration of this country.

Martial Law

"It would be sheer dishonesty to justify this shooting as merely a consequence of hooliganism on the part of the people. It was undeclared martial law operating on the streets of Bombay because the people had dared to sympathise with those whom the Government had declared "rebels". The action of the Government had nothing to do either with self-defence or restoration of order. It was an open attempt to suppress the people for having dared to sympathise with the naval ratings.

"The mass shootings took place mostly in the working-class area. This fact must be noted. For this was an area which was particularly free from breaking open of shops and lootings, etc. No shops were looted or broken open in this area. Some tram stands were burnt, but that was done only after the brutal firing had started. The excuse of hooliganism stands completely exposed, when it is remembered that mass shootings were carried on in areas the political demonstrations had not lost their character at all. The attempt of the Government to whitewash its sins in the name of suppressing lawlessness cannot be successful.

The Victims

"One can understand the Government and its spokesmen raising the cry of hooliganism; but it is distressing to find Congress leaders like Sardar Patel lending support to this interpretation. Such wrong interpretation only helps the Government in justifying its brutal action and leaves the people defenceless.

"Anyone who has seen the dead bodies at the hospitals and the morgues and hundreds of wounded will realise how our people have suffered and what the British Military have done to them. They who have died in the hospitals are not hooligans and goondas, but honest workers and citizens. They comprise Hindus and Muslims, touchables and untouchables, men from Madanpura, Bhendi Bazar and Shivaji Park—in fact from the whole of Bombay. Never had Bombay seen such a united demonstration of all communities. To describe their unity as hooliganism is to slander them and those who have fallen to British bullets. I appeal to all parties to join with us in stopping this repression and demanding an open enquiry into indiscriminate firing of the military and see that a repetition of this bloodbath is prevented. I further warn the press against imperialist attempts to make the Communist Party a scapegoat to hide its own misdeeds."

The Trouble

Mr Dange then traced the origin of the disturbances. The strike of the ratings began on February 19. The public regarded it as only a "strike" and the Government had ample time to settle it. But the "Anglo-Indian" papers began to raise the cry of "mutiny" which foreshadowed repression and trial under martial law.

However the people's mood changed when they heard of the regular battle at the Castle Barracks. They all felt that the Government had determined to crush the naval strike.

On the top of this came on Thursday afternoon the irresponsible and intimidating broadcast of Godfrey who threatened to destroy the Indian Navy. This was conclusive proof to the people that unless they moved the boys would be killed. The Communist Party after having considered the situation on the report of the firing at Castle Barracks decided to give a call for hartal on Friday.

Free Hand Given

As yet there was no intervention or assurance to the people from any Congress or Muslim League leader. Late in the night Sardar Patel and Mr S.K. Patil issued statement disassociating themselves from the hartal. This news was published in the papers on Friday morning. Bombay saw one of the biggest hartals on February 22. All the mills, railway workshops and tramway depots emptied their workers without a single incident. No stones were thrown. None was molested. The people and the working masses were out for political demonstration and not for hooliganism. But the police were on the offensive. The Government officials interpreted the decision of the Congress leaders to disassociate themselves from the hartal as a free hand for them to suppress the people. The Congress leaders may not believe it, but it is a definite fact that the two statements of Sardar Patel and Mr S.K. Patil were exploited to strengthen the repression.

After clashes between the people and the police and indiscriminate firing by the latter, the military were called in and started a reign of terror that lasted for four days.

29. Maulana Azad Advises Caution and Restraint to Strikers

Extracts from a news report, 'Bombay risings ill-advised, says Azad.'

Statesman, 26 February 1946.

Lahore, Feb. 24.... Maulana Azad advised the country that "caution and restraint at the present moment when India's struggle for freedom has reached the final stage" are of supreme importance.

He thought the Bombay risings were "rather ill-advised".

"The RIN ratings did not consult us before embarking on the step they took," he added....

30. M.R. Jayakar Surprised at Congress Admonishing Naval Ratings

Extracts from a letter by M.R. Jayakar to T.B. Sapru; dated Bombay, 27 February 1946.

File No. 807; M.R. Jayakar Papers (1946) [NAI].

Bombay, February 27, 1946.

My dear Tej Bahadur,

... The strike of the Naval Ratings is over, so also are the public disturbances.... Vallabhbhai Patel and Congressmen are on the path of peace and tranquillity, unlike their previous utterances and behaviour. When I read their present admonitions, I feel often surprised at the wonderful change which has come over these big Congressmen. No hartals, no meetings no processions, no closing of schools, no defiance, etc., a complete recantation of their previous teachings. Even the Mahatma now says that it is foolish to distrust the intentions of the British. I am quite sure you share my surprise and delight. There is a secret rivalry between the Communists and Congressmen, each trying to put the other in the wrong. In yesterday's speech Vallabhbhai almost said, without using so many words, that the trouble was due to the Communists trying to rival the Congress in the matter of leadership. The public feel that leading Congressmen should not have hidden themselves in their homes, but should have gone out to quell the disturbances, which ultimately had to be subdued by the use of military force. A curious

change is taking place in Bombay and I shall not be surprised if the Communists will obtain a greater hold on the public mind owing to the apparent 'tameness' of Congress leadership at the present moment. That is the charge against them.

Aruna Asaf Ali is now in the ascendant. Her speeches are full of rhetoric and undisguised defiance of Gandhi's teachings. Bombay was always a mad city, though the nature of its mad leadership and following varied from time to time. It always listen[s] to the loudest demagogue....

M.R. Jayakar.

31. T.B. Sapru Worried About Communists Fomenting RIN Troubles

Extracts from a letter by T.B. Sapru to M.R. Jayakar; dated Allahabad, 3 March 1946.
File No. 807; M.R. Jayakar Papers (1946) [NAI].

Allahabad, 3rd March 1946.

My dear Jayakar,

... What awful times we have been passing through! The strike of the Naval Ratings led to a terrible chaos and disorder in Bombay. As you know there were sympathetic strikes in Karachi and some other places. These are bad omens of the time. Speaking for myself I have no doubt whatsoever that these disorders and disturbances are being deliberately formented by the Communists who, having been driven out of the Congress, are very disgruntled with it. The Communists to my mind are playing the game of Russia. It is no use thinking of Russia as a democratic country or in terms of Lenin's communism. It is a new kind of Imperialism worse than the czaris[t] one which has sprung up there and the danger of it is that it carries on its propaganda in the name of democracy. It has already acquired a foothold in Persia and from Persia to the borders of India is only one hop. This seems to me to be the strongest argument against Pakistan. The Parliamentary Delegation agreed with me in this. Nor must the danger be overlooked that the Communists have thrown in their lot with the Muslim League. It is true that Congressmen have at times, in recent months, breathed fire and fury, but if they are appreciating the danger of the situation now and advising people that there should be no hartals, no meetings and no processions, I should give them credit for an appreciation of the danger even at a belated date. Personally I liked the Mahatma's statement which he issued two or three days ago very much....

I have been following Aruna Asaf Ali's speeches and I am glad that the Mahatma has severely rebuked her....

T.B. Sapru.

32. Last Message of Naval Central Strike Committee

Press release, 'To the leaders and the people.'

People's Age, 3 March 1946.

Bombay, Feb. 23. The Naval Central Strike Committee wishes to inform the people of India and particularly the people of Bombay that it has decided to call off the strike. It has come to the decision after discussions with Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, who has assured them that the

Congress would see that there was absolutely no victimisation of any of the strikers and that their demands would be taken up with the authorities. Confident that the Congress would stand by them and sure of the support of the Muslim League, after the sympathetic statement of Mr Jinnah, the Committee decided to call off the strike.

The Committee, however, reminds the Naval and Government authorities and tells the people and leaders of all the political parties, particularly Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel and Mr Jinnah, that the ratings in the Navy will not hesitate one moment to come out and strike again if the authorities make any attempt to victimise a single striker.

The Naval Central Strike Committee once more congratulates the people of Bombay, particularly the workers, students and citizens, for their sympathetic strike during the past two days. These actions have inspired the men and the Navy with the consciousness that all India believes its cause to be just and right.

Together with the people, the Committee mourns the loss of hundreds of lives due to the brutal and absolutely unjustified firing by the British Military forces on innocent men and women. It condemns with all the force at its command this action of the Military and the Government which has resulted in a bloodbath in Bombay, worse than any Indian has yet seen.

And a last word to our dear people:

You have stood by us. We are glad, proud and grateful for that. We mourn the loss of life. Had you not stood by us and demonstrated in your thousands, our cause and our strike would have been drowned in blood. The authorities may yet try to victimise us and punish us. We shall fight that—we ask you also to be ready to fight that and redeem the solemn promise of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel and Mr Jinnah.

Our strike has been a historic event in the life of our Nation. For the first time the blood of men in the services and men in the streets flowed together in a common cause.

We, in the services, will never forget this. We know also that you, our brothers and sisters, also will not forget.

Long Live Our Great People. Jai Hind.

—Naval Central Strike Committee.

33. Communist Party Denounces Congress for Settlement of RIN Mutiny

Editorial, 'In the name of our dead.'

People's Age, 3 March 1946.

The speeches and statements of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel and even those of Pandit Nehru, made soon after the episode of the Indian Naval Ratings' strike, show where the Congress leaders are leading the people by their policy of compromise and blind partisanship.

A thousand British Military armed with tommy-guns, rifles and machine-guns ran amuck in the city shooting indiscriminately taking a toll of 270 innocent lives and wounding some 2000. India has not seen another more brutal and barbarous bloodbath since Jallianwalla Bagh.

Terror Not Condemned

Did Sardarji condemn the repression with the same ire with which he used to in the old days of Bardoli? Did we hear a flaming and indignant indictment of the same from Pandit Nehru's mouth?

No. We did not. Sardarji's wrath was reserved for the Communists who called the hartal and for those Congressmen who he said were striving to set up a "parallel Congress" within the Congress. He, no doubt, shed a genuine tear of sympathy for the killed, but seemed to excuse the real perpetrators of this mass murder by suggesting that the hartal brought in hooliganism, which in its turn led to the firing. The Mayor of Bombay has demanded an enquiry into hooliganism, but has not said a word about Military terror. The Nationalist Press, with a few honourable exceptions, plays the same tune.

Our leaders insult the suffering and the patriotism of our people when they make such pettifogging arguments, which line them up with the Government in justifying brutal terror. It is a pity that those who glorified August do not find words to pay tribute to the heroism of the people against this unprecedented Bombay massacre or to denounce this massacre. Why was there not a word of encouragement to the relatives of those that have fallen?

Deaf to the Voice of the Masses

Sardarji is very much hurt that "the people of Bombay disregarded the advice of the Congress." They did so when they came out in an all-out strike and hartal despite the contrary call of the Congress.

All glory to the people who rose as one man to support the Naval Ratings in their struggle for their just demands and to save them from the destruction they were threatened with by the Naval Authorities.

Should they have sat in cowardly silence when Godfrey had threatened to blow up the Navy and when the British Military was actually shooting at the Naval boys?

All glory to the people of Bombay who were not cowed down by the orgy of armed murder which the British regiments let loose against them.

All glory to the people of Bombay who forged the unity of Hindus and Muslims, of Touchables and Untouchables, the unity of all the flags on the barricades, in heroic defence against Police and Military firing.

The mighty strikes, hartals and anti-Imperialist people's demonstrations that were witnessed at Calcutta, Madras, Trichy—in sympathy with the just demands of the Naval Ratings and to condemn Imperialist violence at Bombay—are symptoms of the countrywide new spirit that is stirring all sections of our people today. They show the verdict of the common man all over the country on what was enacted at Bombay; they show that our people will no longer take lying down Imperialist violence against any section of them, or in any part of the country.

It is unfortunate that the leaders of the Congress did not understand the mood of the people, did not listen to the voice of the masses and support their urge for lining up with the struggle of the Naval Ratings by calling a hartal.

Illusions of Settlement

If they had done so, the Government would not have found it so easy to shoot at random as it did, with the Congress opposing the hartal and strike. Greater sanctions would have been forged behind the just demands of the Naval Ratings. Victimisation, which is being visited upon them now, despite the earlier promises of the authorities, would have been averted.

The real reason behind this policy of the Congress leaders is the illusion they nurse about unilateral settlement with the British Government. Everyone from Gandhiji downwards seems to believe that the Cabinet Ministers are coming to India to achieve a final settlement with the Congress on the basis of "Quit India" and independence. They expect a peaceful solution of

the question of Indian freedom, they expect freedom as a gift from the British. That is why they wanted the RIN ratings to desist from a strike and why they did not want the people of Bombay to support the strike by a hartal.

The sooner all give up this illusion the better. Bombay's bloodbath and the victimisation of the RIN Ratings, which has begun, must serve as a warning.

To persist in this policy out of blind sectarianism or because of illusions about easy settlement is to encourage the Government to repeat the performance. But this is just what the leaders are doing. This is what a section of the Press is doing.

Let not partisan interest stand in the way of all of us uniting to condemn this brutal repression. Let none forget that all parties and flags in Bombay were united when its people bled on the streets. Let none libel the brave fighters and the martyrs who fell. In their name let us unite, the Congress, the League and the Communist Party, to demand a full public enquiry into this brutal firing and demand the removal of those who handed over the city to Military rule.

Join Hands to Save RIN Brothers

Let no illusions about the coming mission of the Cabinet Ministers prevent us from joining hands in preventing victimisation of the RIN boys, which has already begun. It is understood reliably that some 400 RIN Ratings have been whisked away from the main shore and ship establishments to unknown places for inquiry. No doubt the C-in-C is carrying out the threat of punishment he gave the other day. This only emphasises once again the urgent need of united action of the people, of the parties, in defence of the just demands of the Ratings.

Let the Congress and League, in whose hands the RIN Ratings have left their case, join hands to avert this victimisation and demand complete equality of treatment to the Indian Navel men with their British brothers.

34. Bombay's Three Days of Bloody Battle

Extracts from an article, 'People's solidarity with RIN brothers.'

People's Age, 3 March 1946.

Three days, Feb. 21-23, 1946, will always be remembered as historic dates in the annals of our freedom struggle.

On the 21st the strike of several thousand ratings of the Indian Navy reached a high spot. These brave strikers resisted the attempt of the British Military to suppress their peaceful strike by shooting.

On the 22nd and 23rd, the workers and people of Bombay supported the heroic action of these men in defence of their just rights, by an unprecedented demonstration of fraternal solidarity, in the form of a complete citywide hartal and strike.

Unity of Three Flags Against Military

British Military intervention sought to drown the demonstration in pools of blood; but the people and workers showed marvels of resourcefulness and resistance and won a moral victory over the terror. True, in some localities, hooligans sought to take advantage of the situation by organising orgies of loot and senseless burning. But the dominant note of the action of the people during those days was united resistance against Police and Military repression.

The unity of the three flags, which has now become a symbol of joint struggle against the common enemy, was in evidence everywhere.

The blood of men of the forces and that of their brothers in civil life has mingled for the first time in the history of our freedom struggle. The Indian Revolution has entered a new phase.

3.5. Lessons from the Riots

Extracts from an article, 'Lessons from the Bombay riots,' by Bharatan Kumarappa.
Free Press Journal, 6 March 1946.

The riots which shook Bombay during the last few days must give us pause. Their immediate cause was sympathy for the RIN ratings (employees of the Royal Indian Navy) in their strike against the British authorities for discriminatory treatment and for the contemptuous behaviour of British officers towards them. But the real cause was that the people of the city were anxious to encourage and to join in any attempt to strike at British rule in India....

What did the rioters do? On analysis their activities will be found to fall under the following main heads:

1. Those directed towards paralysing essential services like transport, municipal amenities, post and telegraph, banks.
2. Those aimed at the Government, e.g., attack on the military and on the police.
3. Those prompted by racial considerations, e.g., damaging cars or firms owned by Europeans, burning of hats and ties.
4. Those done to exploit chaos for one's own purposes, e.g., looting shops, threatening people and extorting money from them, attacking firms or mills because of grudge against the management.

From the above it will be seen that it is altogether wrong to dismiss the riots as purely the work of hooligans. It is only the last type of activities that may be described as such. When the police were withdrawn from streets and concentrated in places where there was trouble, naturally there was free scope for him who will to break into shops and granaries and to loot them. There were no police whatsoever to guard the shops of the city, and the wonder is not that there was looting here and there, but that there was so little of it....

In Bombay there was much destruction of property by the rioters. This deserves to be condemned in no uncertain terms, for the simple reason that property, whether belonging to the Government or to the Municipality, is in the end the nation's. The British are here today and are off tomorrow. They lose nothing if we burn it. It is we who have to pay for repairing and rebuilding what was burnt....

How, for instance, could we have gone about it in the case of Bombay RIN strike, if we were to have acted non-violently? Let us see. When the ratings found that their grievances were ignored by the authorities, the best procedure would have been for them to have put their case before some public organizations capable of dealing with it, and to abide by its decision. The largest public organization in the city and in the country is undoubtedly that of the Congress, and the Ratings did well at least in the end to have got into touch with it. The people of the city should have left the matter there instead of taking it on themselves to act on their own....

It is obvious that to work thus in an organised manner, we need discipline. Congress leaders have cried themselves hoarse on this subject. But mere preaching is not enough. The Congress has to sit down and seriously tackle the question of how to teach people discipline, how to get them to work together as a team, and not a part, each as he pleases....

... One feels that the Congress remains essentially a middle-class organization and has still to reach the working-class. Unless the Congress brings this class within its fold, the country cannot but expect periodical violent upheavals. One saw when one walked on the streets of Bombay during the riots that the educated people had no hand in them. They were managed altogether by others. The Congress had [has] to turn its attention seriously to work amongst them....

36. Bombay Presidency Women's Council's Views Regarding RIN Disturbances

Letter from the President, Bombay Presidency Women's Council, to the Secretary, Home Department, Government of India, dated Bombay, 25 March 1946.

File No. 5/21/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India [NAI].

Bombay, March 25th, 1946.

Sir,

The Management Committee of the Bombay Presidency Women's Council desires to express its very deep concern regarding the recent disturbance in this city which followed upon the strike of the RIN Ratings and which so closely affected every citizen of Bombay. The BPWC is a large and representative Women's organisation actively working for the welfare of women and children, and therefore deeply concerned when incidents occur which are destructive of goodwill and peace and progress.

My Committee wishes me to say at the outset that it deplores and condemns the destruction to property caused by irresponsible elements in this city during the period of the strike. It especially condemns the attacks upon the molestation of citizens in the streets and in their homes, and especially where the molestation of women occurred. While acknowledging the efforts of the Bombay Police to restore order, the Council also pays tribute to the timely and powerful appeal of Mahatma Gandhi, Pandit Nehru and Sardar Patel in calling upon the people to desist from violence as being in the interests of national progress and freedom.

My Committee further wishes me to say that it deplores the fact that a disturbance of this magnitude and seriousness had its roots in grievances of long standing which had not received prompt and adequate attention from the authorities concerned. The Bombay Presidency Women's Council feels very strongly that such disturbances and strikes happen far too often because of the complacent indifference on the part of the authorities to grievances which could and should be met. Such complacency and delatoriness [dilatoriness] frequently drives those who suffer under grievances to policies of desperation. We appeal to all placed in authority, whether today they stand responsible to the British Government, in London (as in the case of Armed Forces) or to the Government of India, or the Government of Bombay, to see to it that grievances receive due and prompt attention. We would further say that, looking to the tense atmosphere in this country at present, any official who neglects grievances and thereby allows bitterness to become extreme is seriously failing his duty to both the people and the government.

While we are not desirous of going into the merits of RIN grievances on this occasion, and while not being able to support them entirely, we, as women, must point out that continued unsatisfactory preparations and arrangements for food are inexcusable, and the absence of family allowance for ratings serving in the RIN is a reprehensible omission.

Regarding the use of firing in order to quell the disturbances, my Committee would draw attention to the numerous complaints of indiscriminate firing on the part of the Police and Military. While there are many who feel that these extreme measures were unnecessary, there are others who feel that the measures taken in Bombay were unduly severe in comparison with those used in Britain, to control strikes, and from many reported instances the Bombay firing suggests panic rather than restraint on the part of those using firearms. It has been said that in some instances the anger of the crowd arose only after firing had taken place. The question of issuing orders to fire at sight without the authority of a declaration of martial law has already been raised by other Public organisations and is one on which we too feel much concerned.

The BPWC, is also greatly concerned by the increasing part played in every disturbance by the Goonda element in this city, through whose exploitation of general unrest, even peaceful demonstrations have degenerated into acts of looting and violence. We would like to support the suggestions already put forward in the Press, that one of the first steps to maintain law and order is to round up the goondas and mavalis whenever the peace of this City is seriously threatened. The time has arrived when the goonda element is a serious and inevitable factor to be reckoned with.

Some months ago the BPWC, addressed a letter to the Government of India regarding the harm done to the general atmosphere in this country by the INA trials. We believe that the generous attitude of the C-in-C in releasing the INA prisoners then under trial did much to lessen the prevailing tension, even though by that time the trials themselves had already done irrevocable harm to feeling throughout the country. We would similarly draw attention to the inevitability [inevitability] of yet another greater harm resulting from the trial and punishment of RIN men. While we fully recognise the necessity of discipline amongst the armed forces of any country and while we acknowledge the difficulties inherent in the situation, we, as women, who desire that justice, understanding and goodwill should prevail, must plead, with all the powers at our command, that the trial and punishment of RIN men at the present time will simply mean a repetition of all the bitterness which the INA trials produced. In support of this pleading we should put forward the following points:

- (a) The recent disturbances ended with quite general understanding that no victimisation would take place. It is therefore our belief that even prosecution of the ringleaders will not only have the unfortunate effect of producing further loss of faith and increased anger, but in the prevailing tense political atmosphere, it will mean that wrongs may be magnified out of all proportion and that bitterness and hatred will be intensified beyond the power of control.
- (b) Most of the RIN men are young people who have been at school during a period when, unhappily, hartals and strikes have been the only way open to them of demanding redress of wrongs. A close study of the psychological aspects of the whole of the disturbances, leads us to feel that trials and punishments now will only serve to keep bitterness alive.

We are firmly of the opinion that such a course with its inevitable result will be very ill-advised and we therefore urge that all efforts should rather be put into the righting of wrongs and into the task of helping India to face [face] in an orderly and peaceful manner the vital phase of her progress which must occupy us in the next few months.

My Committee begs that you will give the points raised in this letter your earnest and generous consideration.

Roshan K. Bharucha.
President,
Bombay Presidency Women's Council.

37. Mahila Sangh, Parel (Bombay), Condemns Firing

The Hon. General Secretary of the Mahila Sangh, Parel, circulated copies of a resolution passed by the Sangh on 28 March 1946, upon the untimely death of Mrs Kamal Donde, a founding member of the Sangh, who had fallen victim to military on 22 February 1946.

File No. 385 (Microfilm Reel No. 25); All India Women's Conference Papers (1946); Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

This meeting of the women of Parel, held under the auspices of the Parel Mahila Sangh, sharply condemns the Government for the savage firing by the military on the demonstrations by Bombay citizens on 22nd February, in support of the strikers of the Royal Indian Navy.

This firing has taken a very heavy toll of the lives of innocent men and women and even children. The meeting firmly holds that this firing which was resorted to without giving any previous warning to the people and at a time when the situation in no way called for such action, was absolutely unhustified [unjustified] and only planned to create terror in the minds of the citizens.

This meeting demands of the Government that it forthwith institute an open and impartial inquiry into this indiscriminate firing by the millitary [military] on those days in furtherance of this demand.

1.vi.b Disturbances in Bombay: Official Perspectives

1. Hunger Strike by 1000 Ratings

Telephone message at 1445 hours, 19 February 1946, from the Military Intelligence Officer, Bombay, to Military Intelligence Directorate, GS Branch. Copy of transcript forwarded to Intelligence Bureau, Home Department, Government of India.

File No. 5/21/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India [NAI].

"Yesterday 1000 ratings started lightening hunger strike. This morning they were joined by Dockyard, Signal Station and Workshop staff. By 1030 hrs, approximately 1000 RIN were moving through the streets of Bombay in RIN, MT. They were armed with hockey sticks and similar weapons. They then started attacking Europeans on sight and smashing shop windows. They attacked a mail van in Hornby Road and desuoyed its contents. A very short distance from where I was standing a British Sgt. was badly injured. Within a few yards of me they smashed a bus and stopped traffic. Up till 1300 hrs today I had reports that 6 BOs [British Officers] had been injured. Although it is reported that most of the ratings have seen collected in HMIS TALWAR, I have seen 3 lorries in the last hour. A Reuter correspondent was informed by some insignificant RIN rating among the rioters, that this is an organised rising which will

be joined by thousands of servicemen in other parts of the country, that they have commandeered army transport, and are prepared to withstand all opposition. (This is unconfirmed). Since this morning 2 Coys of British Infantry have been standing to, and the Admiral and Area Commander are in close touch. The Governor is holding a conference with them this afternoon. It is hoped that the situation will be in hand this afternoon, but if not it is anticipated that it will be dealt with by severe measures. So far the armed police only have been dealing with the situation assisted by the military police. No reports of any shooting incidents have come to my notice yet. I have just had a report that officers outside the Majestic Hotel have been severely injured. The signal office is unapproachable but I have written a detailed report which I am posting today. I am seeing the Admiral at 1500 hrs."

2. Bands of Ratings Roam the Streets of Bombay

Report by the Deputy Director, Intelligence Bureau, to the Director, Intelligence Bureau, Home Department, Government of India; dated 19 February 1946.

File No. 5/21/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India [NAI].

DMI [Director of Military Intelligence] has communicated information to us that RIN ratings are out of hand in Bombay. There was trouble before in the Naval establishment HMIS "Talwar", and apparently ratings there recently requested that Mrs Asaf Ali should be allowed to go and address them. In the present trouble, HMIS "Talwar" is to the fore but other Naval establishments are also affected. The number of men involved appears to be in the neighbourhood of 3000. Information received suggests that bands of ratings are roaming in the streets out of control, British officers have been beaten up and American Military property damaged; an American flag was hauled down and burnt. Naval authorities are in contact with the Commissioner of police and the Army is ready to give assistance to the Naval authorities if asked to do so.

W.N.P. Jenkin.
Deputy Director (C).
19-2-46.

3. Aruna Asaf Ali and Purshottam Das Address Mass Meeting of RIN Ratings

Telephone message at 2130 hours, 19 February 1946, from the Military Intelligence Officer, Bombay, to Military Intelligence Directorate, GS Branch. Copy of the transcript forwarded to Intelligence Bureau, Home Department, Government of India.

File No. 5/21/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India [NAI].

"There was a meeting this afternoon of the Governor, Area Commander and the Admiral, a report of which has been sent to GHQ by Area Commander. Most Immediate.

The present policy is to see how things develop tonight. If necessary Area Commander will order all RIN to be confined to barracks under an armed guard with orders to shoot men disobeying orders. Area Commander will send out army patrols to round up stragglers of whom many are all over Bombay. As a last resort ships will be disarmed.

Massed meeting of RIN has been arranged in HMIS "Talwar" between 1000 and 1100 hours 20th February. I understand that Mrs Asaf Ali and Purshottam Das, Congress Socialist Leaders will address the meeting. I am uncertain whether RIN authorities have or have not given permission for the meeting to be held in HMIS "Talwar". The Congress President has issued a statement which will appear in press tomorrow to the effect that unless Government stick to declaration of September 1945, Congress will organise an all India movement. The Governor has refused to interfere by placing restrictions on movements of political leaders.

Five police officers were injured today, including Supdt Heuson and Inspector Scott—the former seriously injured. The Commissioner of Police is understood to have directed that Civil Police will maintain order in streets among the civil population and will not open fire on RIN personnel. He considers the incident to be a Service matter to be dealt with by Services.

Public opinion has been expressed to the effect that the attitude of the police today has been ideal and if they had been aggressive the civil population would have joined in the trouble.

It is reported that Congress flags were flown on RIN ships in Bombay afloat. It is confirmed the Congress flag was flying on the Flagship up to 1600 hours today."

4. Firing on Ratings Confined to Castle Barracks

Director of Intelligence, HQ India Command: Extracts from Situation Report No. 1, dated 21 February 1946.

File No. 5/21/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India [NAI].

RIN Mutiny

Bombay

1. Situation reported by Flag Officer, Bombay, at 0940 hrs 21 Feb. Ratings began to break out of Castle Barracks this morning and Maharratta guard were compelled to open fire. From 0930 hrs to 1005 hrs sporadic firing occurred. At 1005 hrs fire was returned by ratings, who had obtained arms and ammunition from magazine. Instructions were at once passed to all naval establishments to render useless all Arms and Ammunition. 1035 and 1040 hrs signals were intercepted from two ships saying that if any shots were fired by military from shore all ships would open fire. At 1045 hrs HMIS NARBADA broadcast on loud hailer inciting other ships to open fire if fire was opened from shore. At 1050 hrs a platoon of British troops arrived in Castle Barracks. Ratings from the barracks were going on board HMIS JUMNA whose guns were trained to open fire on barracks, as soon as the latter were clear of mutineers. At 1120 hrs a message was sent from mutineers to ships in stream ordering all British officers to quit ship and asking if any Indian officers wished to join the mutineers. At 1130 hrs ships opened small arms fire on dockyard. A signal was sent by FOB to all ships at 1131 hrs ordering officers to leave ships.

2. Situation report from Flag Officer, Bombay, timed 1320 hrs 21 Feb. states that it was reported that all ships were raising steam to hoist ammunition. Two Indian officers came with a message from Leading Tel [Tegraphist] Khan, that, if military were withdrawn, ratings would resume nonviolent strike.

3. HMIS MARVE and LACHLIMAR reported all quiet but considered that any attempts to remove arms would provoke trouble. HMIS GONDWANA (ship) intended opening fire on LION gate as flag was still flying but fire not yet been opened up to time of message.

4. At 1214 hrs firing recommenced in Dockyard and Barracks area and continued till 1310 hrs. At the same time a series of telephone conversations took place between Flag Officer, Bombay, and Leading Tel Khan. A meeting was arranged to discuss the possibility of a truce.

Karachi

5. Report received by telephone from NOIC [Naval Officer in Command], Karachi at 1130 hrs 21 Feb. states: At about 0830 hrs ratings of HMIS HIMALAYA went on strike. Of remaining ratings in HMIS BAHADUR and CHAMAK some are working and some are not but all are quiet. HMIS MONZE and HMIS DILAWAR have no trouble. HMIS HINDUSTAN ratings have taken complete control of the ship and are firing on the Army with all weapons at their disposal from 4 inch to .303.

6. Army Commander, Northern Command, in a telephone message at 1140 hrs. 21 Feb. states: Situation in Karachi serious. All RIN ships mutinied and firing all round with their guns. Small British RN detachment trying to take them on.

5. Ratings Exchange Fire and Seize Ships

Secraphone message received by Intelligence Bureau, Home Department, Government of India, from the Chief Intelligence Officer, Bombay, at 3:30 p.m. on 21 February 1946.

File No. 5/21/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India [NAI].

Situation in Bombay

The situation deteriorated this morning and is now serious. The Military have cordoned off the area from the Yacht Club to the road running to Ballard pier, which includes the Castle Barracks in which RIN mutineers are holding out. Last night they tried to break out but were unsuccessful. This morning they were fired on the Mahrattas on guard at the gates. From the Castle Barracks wall the RIN mutineers have fired on the police guard in the Mint. A burst of machine-gun fire was heard from this area about 2 p.m. today. Flags are not being flown on many ships in the harbour opposite the Castle Barracks area. One RIN ship, probably the Jumna, is coming in closer to this area. Men have been going from ships to the barracks. It has been reported but not yet confirmed that a signal has been received by the Naval Authorities from the mutineers that if the RIN personnel in Castle Barracks are fired on they will be evacuated to the ships, and the barracks will be destroyed by gun fire. (CIO explained that he has no reliable information about the situation on the RIN ships. He thinks it probable that those ships which are flying no flags are RIN ships some of which may have been seized by the mutineers).

2. It is not yet known if any RIN Commissioned Officers are concerned, but one was seen in mufti demonstrating along with ratings on Tuesday night. Today's *Free Press Journal* contained a letter sympathising with demonstrators signed "An RIN Officer". A malicious rumour is current in the city that two RIN officers are in a local jail and are going to be shot. 500 RIAF personnel suddenly left their camp at Marine Lines at about 10 a.m. this morning and went to join other RIAF personnel at Andheri. They walked back quietly into Marine Lines with some Andheri men about 2 p.m. and were quite amenable. They will have a meeting on messing

arrangements this evening. At about 1.20 p.m., 500 RIN ratings were reported to be coming into Bombay from Bandra and an effort was being made by the Police to hold them up.

3. A source has reported that Patel has had nothing to do with this mutiny, and that the mutineers have acted on their own. This confirms the Commissioner of Police's report dated 20th February. It is also reported that Parshottam Tricumdas¹ will have nothing to do with them. Parshottam Tricumdas and Aruna Asaf Ali are to speak at Chowpatti at 6.30 p.m. tomorrow.

4. Three mills went on strike this morning on account of the ration cut. D.S. Vaidya has issued a Communist leaflet appealing for support for the Naval ratings demand.

5. According to a Press report RIN ratings at Lonavla are also "on strike". Some of them are reported to have seen Aruna Asaf Ali on her way through to Poona.

¹ Congress Socialist leader.

6. Flag Officer Threatens Mutineers with Overwhelming Force

Director of Intelligence, HQ India Command: Situation Report No. 2, dated 21 February 1946.

File No. 5/21/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India [NAI].

RIN Mutiny

Bombay

1. Firing was resumed at 1350 hrs. At 1430 hrs FOB¹ met a leader of the mutineers in the Dockyard. He warned the latter that if the mutineers continued they would take the consequences and added that no condition other than unconditional surrender should be accepted; that there could be no question of a withdrawal of troops. The leader then asked what would happen if the ships opened fire. FOB replied "we will take the consequences and so must you. There are overwhelming forces arriving in Bombay immediately and if you persist you will be completely obliterated. I have nothing further to say, and my advice to you is to tell the men that unconditional surrender is to be complied with immediately."

2. Shortly after this the cease fire flag was hoisted in the dockyard and on ships in the harbour. Later on two of the leaders came to the Navy Officer and asked permission to enter Castle Barracks with a white flag to persuade the men to accept these conditions.

3. By 1443 hrs firing was reported in the Dockyard. By 1550 hrs a police report stated that a small shell had caused minor injuries to several civilians at Mallet Bunder Road. By 1602 hrs a listening post reported heated argument amongst rating whether to continue or not. About 12 to 15 ratings landed at Apollo Banda armed with rifles, raided food stalls and put off again. Troops were reported to have arrived on HMIS SHIVAJI at 1640 hrs. The last report timed 1657 hrs stated that firing had recommenced in Castle Barracks area.

4. Movements report one shell through funnel of HMT BATORY. Owing to labour refusing to work while trouble continues, sailings of one or two store ships of BRINDJAP may be delayed.

5. A Naval Squadron is en route to Bombay and at 1602 hrs was reported to be proceeding at maximum speed. This squadron consists of:

HMS GLASGOW

HMS CARROM
HMS NESS
HMS HALLADALE
HMS LOCHMORE
HMS LOCHQUOICH
HMS PETARD
HMS CAVALIER

Strong air reinforcements are also moving to the area and military reinforcements are also concentrating there.

6. A report from Bombay, which confirms information received by the Commissioner of Police on 20 Feb. 46, was to the effect that Patel had nothing to do with the mutiny; that the mutineers had acted on their own; and that Purshottam Tricumdas, a Congress Socialist leader, would have nothing to do with them.

Karachi

7. HMIS HINDUSTAN which was forced to return to port on 20 Feb. 46 is berthed alongside and opened fire at about 1130 hrs this morning. Firing only lasted about ten minutes. Seven men were reported wounded and one killed.

8. As regard all RIN ships the situation is as follows:

(a) HMIS HIMALAYA: POs' and CPOs' have stood fast and done exceedingly good work during the day. 150 ratings have now been persuaded to return to the establishment and are quiet.

(b) HMIS DILAWAR as far as known has not been effected.

(c) HMIS BAHADUR and HMIS CHAMAK are both in a state of mutiny but the degree is not known

9. Strong air reinforcements are moving to Mauripur. A strong military force is already available in Karachi.

Madras

10. HMIS ADYAR: 75 ratings from HMIS ADYAR walked out of the barracks at 0700 and returned to duty at 1100. They marched through the town to show their sympathy with the Bombay strikers and made no other complaints. No incidents have been reported. CPOs, POs and Leading Rates were not involved.

RIAF

11. The airmen who were on strike in Delhi have mostly returned to work today.

12. At Bombay RIN mutineers are reported to have invited airmen to join them. The latter were not enthusiastic. Later, however, some 500 airmen are reported to have refused duty in sympathy with the RIN up to 1700 hrs there was no information of their having joined with the mutineers.

13. At Lahore about 350 airmen have refused duty on the alleged grounds that they are dissatisfied with their living conditions.

1 Flag Officer, Bombay
2 Petty Officer
3 Chief Petty Officer.

7. Congress Disowns Any Participation in Mutiny

Extracts from telegram by the Governor of Bombay, to the Viceroy; dated 22 February 1946.

File No. 5/21/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India [NAI].

Military situation has been reported on regularly by GOC to C-in-C. General Lockhart, Commander Southern Army, now in command of all ... [indecipherable] ... and situation appears well in hand. Mutineers mainly contained in barracks but some are in possession of several small ships which are covered by fortress guns.

City has remained calm so far with little reaction except some natural alarm in areas close to docks. Congress officially disowns participation in mutiny but left wing elements and Communists are trying to work up sympathy and there may be some trouble with mill hands and transport workers.

Civilian casualties so far as known 14 injured of whom 5 in hospital 7 injured were police....

8. Communist Party Support for Mutineers

Director of Intelligence, HQ India Command: Extracts from Daily Security Summary No. 88 (up to 1700 hrs 22 February 1946), dated 22 February 1946.

File No. 5/21/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India [NAI].

Rin Mutiny

1. In addition to what has already appeared in the Press, MIO¹ Bombay, reports that the Bombay Congress Party have declared that they do not support the RIN mutineers. MIO continues "I have strong information to show that the Communist Party are supporting the mutineers."

MIO, Bombay, further reports that two malicious and false rumours have been spread round the city:

(a) that two RIN officers were to be shot on 21 Feb. in Arthur Road Civil Jail.

(b) that men of the Mahratta LI [Light Infantry] refused to open fire on the RIN mutineers and had to be replaced by British Infantry.

Labour Unrest

2. MIO, Bombay, in a telephone message at 2115 hrs on 21 Feb. states that three large mills in the Parel area stopped work on 21 Feb. against the cut in rations. Approximately 12,000 men are affected. A procession was taken out without serious incidents though the police are anxious.

He further reports that all transport services run by BEST² will cease work on 22 Feb. and a general hartal is expected on account of the ration cut. (Press reports state that, on the advice of Sardar Patel, the Bombay Provincial Congress Committee is issuing an appeal to the public not to observe this hartal.)

Defence Headquarters

6. The Security Officer, Defence Headquarters, in a report dated 20 Feb. 46, states that "sympathy with the INA movement is on the increase in DHQ.³ Whereas, formerly, only Hindu clerk[?] were interested, the Rashid case has now stirred up Muslim feelings. A reliable

source from amongst Muslim clerks said on 19 Feb. that "if Jinnah permitted, they would burn all files of DHQ and that unlike Hindu clerks, the Muslims would not remain unrestrained."

The report goes on to say that "Congress-minded clerks of DHQ, following an alleged Party lead, are now advocating:

- (a) a boycott of all Victory Week celebrations.
- (b) that they should remain at work on Victory Week holidays."

Collective Indiscipline: Ind Stn Wksp, Dehu

7. on 16 Feb. 46, 66 IORs¹ of Ind Stn Wksp, Dehu staged a 'sit down strike', but refused to state their grievances. Eventually one man stated that they complained of very long working hours, abuse by the 'CO' and other officers and or generally unsympathetic treatment by their superiors. The Jemadar Adjutant stated that he did not know what the trouble was about. After being warned of the seriousness of their offence, the men returned to their lines.

A Court of Inquiry was convened for 18 Feb., but on that morning the same men again refused to work, this time stating collectively and individually that they would not work so long as the OC² Major White, remained in command of the unit. All 66 IORs were then placed under arrest. The Jemadar Adjutant, whose attitude throughout had been most unhelpful and who was obviously in sympathy with the IORs was also placed under arrest.

An Appeal to All Army Clerks

8. Below is a copy of a typed circular found on a GHQ/Irwin Stadium Bus on 19 Feb. 46:

"Comrades,

The demands in the form of requests were placed before the sanctioning authorities but it seems that they have ignored them. This negligence to pay any heed [heed] to our requests has been possible as our master still cherish the idea that as there has been no protests [protests] after the rising of 1857, there won't be any in future. The demands made were all justified and were legal ones. 'Ve can see by our side the BOR's [British Other Ranks] enjoy so many previledges [privileges] which we don't [don't]. Is it because we are subject nation? We do deserve more previledges [privileges] than the whitemen as we voluntarily helped the Govt win the war. You Army clerks are supposed [supposed] to be the best educated personnel in the Indian Army. The illiterates might not know there [their] rights. But you are there to let them know all about it. We are people of a country which is not allowed to keep sufficient arms. So we have no other means of protesting than a Non Violent strike. The RIAF has started it. Now it is your turn to join and strengthen it. Disciplinary action can be taken only against two or three men but it is an absurd question when it is against the non violent rebellion [rebellion] of 20 lakh. Please start it without delay. The time for your release is approaching near. Tell your friends to joint [join] it [the strike]. Tell your men all about it. Make them protest against the present Government and reach the goal of success.

Jai Hind.

Please pass it [this circular] to all of your friends who are in difference process [defence forces] out [side] of India. We have passed it to all units in India Comd [Command]. Please follow the [example of] RIAF.

Copy of WAC(I) for favour of cooperation in their own interests."

It is believed that other copies of this may have been distributed in offices. Any found should be sent to the Security Officer, DHQ (Room No. 29-E Block) giving date, place and time of finding.

T.W. Boyce.
Brig. A/DMI. 22/2/46/

-
- 1 Military Intelligence Officer.
 - 2 Bombay Electricity Supply and Tramway.
 - 3 Defence Headquarters.
 - 4 Indian Other Ranks.
 - 5 Commanding Officer.
 - 6 Officer in Charge

9. Army and Air Force Deployed Against RIN Mutineers

Director of Intelligence, HQ India Command: Situation Report No. 3, dated 22 February 1946.

File No. 5/21/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India [NAI].

RIN Mutiny

Bombay

1. The situation appears to be under reasonable control in all areas except Castle Barracks and even here it is fairly quiet. Last night parties from ships attempted to come ashore, it is believed in search of food, but were turned back by Marines. Other parties may have succeeded in getting ashore, but there is no information to this effect.

2. There are indications that water has been cut off at Castle Barracks and the mutineers are probably getting short of food there too.

Last night trouble started in the City by hooligan elements. Civil Police had to open fire twice. Local Sub Area Commander is now conferring with the Commissioner of Police.

Police worried that the trouble may spread today.

3. During the night intercepted communications between ships and shore, between mutineers were to the effect that all should be ready for action by new tide and another message said by 0000 hrs.

4. No information, however, about any action during night. The bulk of troops and RAF have arrived. The Army Commander is now in conference with Area Commander and senior Naval Officers. Another conference is being held at 1100 hrs.

RAF are now carrying out recce of the dock area.

Arty [Army] now getting into action positions.

5. Last night there was a little trouble with portion of G.T. Coy which seized arms and said they were going to march out. They burnt out a few tents, but they were eventually got under control and all arms removed. They attempted to persuade another PI [platoon] of the same coy [company] to join them but PI refused and told them to clear out. Another 25 drivers of this coy at Kurla also tried to give trouble, but were put under arrest at once. Last night there were some signs of trouble in a Supply Depot at Kurla but all the arms were secured. Tps [Troops] were sent to the Depot and the situation is now under control.

6. **Mahrattas** have done excellent work and the reported incident of their having refused to fire on mutineers and being relieved by British troops was actually a normal relief.

Vizagapatam

7. HQ 168 (Vizagapatam) Sub Area reports that the following action was taken at dawn today: All mutineers totaling 306 were arrested and placed in the military prison. HMIS Circar was occupied, all arms secured and all ships boarded. No force was used and the situation was completely quiet at 0750 hrs today.

Karachi

8. The situation at Karachi at 0950 hrs was as follows:

a) HMIS Bahadur (ship), Chamak, Himalaya, and Dilawar were under the control of officers and were quiet. HMIS Hindustan (ship) is still controlled by the mutineers who have refused to listen to NOIC. Troops are now in position for any further action required.

(b) 2 Black Watch, at the request of the Naval Authorities, have occupied the High Angle [?] School and have taken over the guns. In other establishment the Naval authorities have already removed breach blocks.

(c) IORs of Embarkation HQ were reported to be restive as a result of all day contact with the mutineers on 21 Feb. They were due to be evacuated early this morning.

(d) Unconfirmed casualties—RIN 7 wounded. 15 Para Bn 2 wounded.

(e) Commander Curtis has arrived and assumed charge of NOIC. He visited RIN ratings on Manora evening 21 Feb. and was received with an ovation.

(f) The RIAF other ranks on Drigh Road have refused duty again this morning.

Note: The Shore establishments mentioned above are:

HMIS CHAMAK	-- Radar School, Karachi.
HMIS HIMALAYA	-- Gunnery School, Karachi.
HMIS DILAWAR	-- Young Boys' Training Establishment, Karachi.
HMIS CIRCAR	--- Naval Base, Vizagapatam.

10. Strike Leaders Urge their Men to Hold Out

Director of Intelligence, HQ India Command: Situation Report No. 4, dated 22 February 1946.

File No. 5/21/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India [NAI].

RIN Mutiny

1. FOBRIN is reported by telephone at 0946 hrs that all was quiet. At about 2000 hrs 21 Feb., officers proceeded to Castle Barracks with a mutineer leader and received the surrender of a large quantity of arms and ammunition. There is still a considerable quantity of ammunition remaining and attempts will be made today to collect it.

2. Ratings from ships in Dockyard manned defence posts inside the Dockyard during the night as they expected attack. These posts were withdrawn this morning and ratings were seen walking about the Dockyard unarmed.

3. During the night of almost constant R/T chatter between the ships and HMIS TALWAR (Installation) one message from the "President" in TALWAR urged ships to hold out and

stated that the men's case was to be discussed in the House of Commons today; also that Mr Jinnah and all political parties were on the men's side.

4. HMIS NARBADA (ship) signalled that it was probable that ships in the stream would be attacked by soldiers during the night and that all were to observe non-violence and allow themselves to be arrested. All the messages indicate that two schools of thought appear to be developing with NARBADA as the moderates and HMIS KHYBER (ship) as the more violent. Signals were also made to the "President" and also to the Dockyard Signal Station asking for food and water and saying that if not provided in the morning they would come ashore and get it.

5. FOBRINs report gives the situation to be as follows:

- | | |
|---------------------|---|
| (a) HMIS AKBAR | — All quiet, majority of men in establishment. |
| (b) HMIS MACHLIMAR | — ditto. |
| (c) HMIS CHEETAH | — ditto. |
| (d) HMIS KAKAURI | — On hunger strike, rather uneasy, no violence. |
| (e) HMIS FEROZE | — Quiet. Most of men on board. |
| (f) CASTLE BARRACKS | — Quiet. Have asked for food and water. Not being provided. |
| (g) HMIS TALWAR | — Quiet and orderly. |
| (h) FORT BARRACKS | — Quiet. |
| (i) HMIS HAMALA | — Much improved. Ratings quite. |
| (j) HMIS SHIVAJI | — No report. |

6. At 0930 hrs HMIS NARBADA (ship) made a signal to all ships to send representative on board to attend a conference.

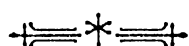
7. During the disturbances in Bombay City reported in Sitrep. No. Sub/Lt COWELL, RIN, VR was reported killed by a bullet.

Karachi

7. NOIC Karachi, reported by telephone at 1115 hrs that HMIS Hindustan (ship) was brought under fire and surrendered after 25 mins. The ship's company was fallen in on the jetty. Further details are awaited.

Note: The shore establishments mentioned above are:

- | | |
|----------------|-----------------------------------|
| HMIS AKBAR | — Seamen's Training Establishment |
| HMIS CHEETAH | — Ratings' Demob Centre. |
| HMIS MACHLIMAR | — Anti-sub Trg School. |
| HMIS KAKAURI | — Ratings' Demob Centre. |
| HMIS FEROZE | — Officer Trg Establishment. |
| HMIS TALWAR | — Signal School. |
| FORT BARRACKS | — Ratings' Establishment. |
| HMIS HAMALA | — Landing Craft Base. |
| HMIS SHIVAJI | — Mech Trg Establishment. |



11. Communist Campaign for Complete Hartal in Bombay

Secraphone message received by Intelligence Bureau, Home Department, Government of India, from the Chief Intelligence Officer, Bombay, at 3.40 p.m. on 22 February 1946.

File No. 5 21/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India [NAI].

Situation in Bombay

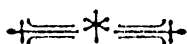
Last night the Communists using vans with loudspeakers, etc., called for a hartal throughout Bombay today: for all mills and schools, etc., to close, and for transport not to run. In the early hours of this morning the hooligan element started looting and burning shops. This morning only even mills were working and a few more were working partially, but by 2.30 p.m. all mills were closed except for three working partially. The GIP and BBICI Railway Workshops have also closed down. Buses and trams have stopped running. Local trains are still running. During the morning the same type of trouble spread through the city and before midday four military columns which included Armoured cars were sent to assist the police in dealing with the city disturbances. The situation in the whole centre of the island is extremely serious. Car being burnt. Three post offices, some police chowkis and tram shelters, etc., are also being burnt. Street lights and shop windows are being smashed. About 1.30 p.m. a party of unarmed police in Byculla were stripped of their uniforms by a crowd.

2. At 1 p.m. a meeting of RIN personnel was observed breaking up on the Mole at the dockyard where some RIN ships are alongside. About midday crowds of sympathisers with the RIN ratings started disturbances in the Fort area. Rioting has never occurred there before. Europeans were assaulted and their cars burnt. This was especially bad on Hornby Road. Two armoured cars which were clearing up riotous mobs fired over their heads. The situation can only be described as grave as the disturbances are so widespread.

3. About 2.30 a.m. a party of RIASC set fire to their tents at Worli, after apparently having been contacted by naval ratings, and left for the city in lorries carrying arms and ammunition. They were rounded up during the night and taken back to their camp where they are now under a naval guard.

4. Congress were against today's hartal and Vallabhbhai Patel was emphatic about this, but the Communists' call for sympathy with the RIN ratings has won the day and the Congress Labour Union has been totally ineffective. Police are still unable to say how much firing has taken place, but it has been frequent, though probably not more than a few rounds in each incident. The biggest and most troublesome crowd has been around Bendhi Bazaar.

5. This morning about 20 planes flew over the RIN ships which are still in the hands of the mutineers. Outside them three destroyers are lying in the harbour. Castle Barracks is still holding out. There is no confirmation of reports of the RIN ships having fired on the city. The telephone system is still working and posts are being delivered where possible.



12. Bombay Under Curfew

Secraphone message received by Intelligence Bureau, Home Department, Government of India, from Chief Intelligence Officer, Bombay, at 9.30 a.m. on 23 February 1946. File No. 5/21/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India [NAI].

Situation in Bombay

Since the curfew was imposed last night there has been no further trouble in Bombay. An unconfirmed report states that millhands of two mills went back to work this morning under the instructions of the Red Flag Union, but subsequently a crowd gathered at one of the mills and brought the workers out.

HMIS TALWAR was flying the flag of surrender this morning.

A meeting of the leaders of the mutineers is expected to be held at 11 hours. The leaders have, however, made it clear that all their demands must be conceded in full.

A Free Press report says that 100 people have been killed and 1000 injured, but no authentic official estimate of casualties is available.

No police firing took place throughout the night except according to an unconfirmed report, at one place in Bombay.

13. Congress and Muslim League Peace Brigades

Telephone message received by Intelligence Bureau, Home Department, Government of India, from "Mr Simms" [E.A. Simms of War Department?] at 1245 hours on 23 February 1946.

File No. 5/21/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946).

Bombay Disturbances

A curfew order was enforced on the night of 22/23 and the night passed off quietly. This morning (23rd) all mills are on strike and in the mill area north of the city all transport is at a standstill. No buses or trams are running. Rowdy crowds are trying to loot shops and banks but the situation is more or less under control.

2. The figure of persons injured up to 9 a.m. today are 777 of whom 63 are dead. The figures for the police (which are included in the above) are 37 officers and 93 constables injured of whom 2 police constables have been killed. 28 grains shops and a number of other shops have been looted and a large number of vehicles have been burnt.

3. The latest position in the mutiny is that all vessels are flying black flags to signify surrender. The Admiral has sent representatives on board to ascertain if the surrender is unconditional; but results of his have not yet been learnt.

4. Congress and Muslim League have sent out peace brigades today to try to restore order and induce labourers to go back to work.

5. Congress advised against the hartal yesterday. The Communists however called for a hartal and sent representatives distributing leaflets calling for a hartal both as a sign of sympathy with the RIN and as a demonstration of force. There is no doubt that the Communists are directly responsible for the trouble.

6. Curfew order and orders banning assemblies of more than 5 persons and carrying of deadly weapon continue.

14. Mutinous Ships and Establishments Surrender

Director of Intelligence, HQ India Command: Situation Report No. 6, dated 23 February 1946.

File No. 5/21/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India [NAI].

Bombay

RIN. A report at 0945 hrs today stated that all ships and establishments have hoisted the blue flag and have surrendered. Officers have gone on board their ships and establishments and White Ensigns are flying out. By order of FOB, the blue flag is also to remain flying. No damage to offices or records has taken place. The commanding officer HMIS KAKAURI (demobilisation centre) has been ordered to return to his establishment. FOB is also visiting ships. It is considered safe for unarmed ships to enter.

Internal Situation. A report from the CIO Bombay at 0930 hrs today, stated that since the curfew was imposed last night there had been no further trouble in Bombay. An unconfirmed report states that two mills were back at work this morning under the instructions of the Red Flag Union, but later a crowd gathered at one mill and brought the workers out again. This leaves 70 mills out of 75 on strike.

RIAF. The men are still on strike but are quiet and disown any sympathy with RIN mutineers.

Ahmedabad

About 26 [See 1.vi.b.16 below, where this figure has been ammended to 2600] railway men have struck as a protest against ration cuts, and are stopping trains leaving or entering the town. This may seriously aggravate the food situation in Bombay.

Karachi

RIN. HMIS TRAVANCORE sailed from Karachi when action was taken against HMIS HINDUSTAN (ship). She has been ordered to return to harbour. Otherwise there is no change in the naval situation. Only light reaction amongst the civil population to the RIN mutiny is reported. There was no occasion to use force. The mutineers casualties during the action against Hindustan are reported as killed 8 ratings, wounded 37 ratings. Our own casualties, wounded 3 BOR's. It is considered safe for unarmed ships to enter.

RIAF. The RIAF at Drigh Road have refused duty and are now under close arrest.

Madras

Approximately 1600 BOR's of REME at AVADI Reserve Base, have given notice of intention to refuse duty from today. The reason given is that the RAF through striking have improved their position and repatriation rate. Their attitude so far is well behaved. RIAF have all returned to work.

Cochin

The RIN ratings who marched through the town on 23 Feb. returned to barracks, but it is not yet known if they are working or not. There is no change at VIZAGAPATAM.

Calcutta

RIN are still refusing duty but are quiet. Some minor civil disturbances in the town were caused by irresponsible students on 22 Feb., but the situation was quickly brought under control by the police.

Delhi

There is no change in the situation in Delhi and all is quiet.

Ambala and Lahore

The RIAF are back at work.

15. RIN Surrender Implemented

Telegram by the Secretary to the Governor of Bombay, to the Private Secretary to the Viceroy; dated 23 February 1946.

File No. 5/12/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India [NAI].

... RIN surrender is being implemented. Officers have returned to ships. It is not clear that all ratings yet understand implications of surrender, but further violence from them is very unlikely.

In the City after a day of considerable violence the situation has become somewhat easier this evening, and trouble appears to be becoming localised in two or three areas. The main business centre was relatively quiet today.

Considerable damage to property has been done. Police chowkies were burnt, grain shops were looted, transport including part of a train was burnt, and part of a mill burnt.

Three battalions are now out in aid of civil power. Service Chiefs maintaining close contact with His Excell [ency].

Total casualties believed to be over 200 killed and a thousand injured.

Peace Committee has been formed. Congress and League continue to cooperate.

16. Army Takes Over RIN Ships and Establishments

Director of Intelligence, HQ India Command: Situation Report No. 7, dated 23 February 1946.

File No. 5/21/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India [NAI].

Amendment to Situation Report No. 6, Dated 23 February 1946.

Under the heading AHMEDABAD the figure "26" should read "2600". [See 1.vi.b 14 above].

Bombay

R/N. Arrangements have been made for the Army to take over ships and establishments. RN ships are remaining outside the harbour.

Army. Personnel in the Supply Depot KALYAN refused to work this morning. The KURLA Supply Depot is back to work and the situation is normal.

Internal Security. Rioters set fire to an oil storage tank at HAYBUNDER on 22 February evening. Most mills are closed and those not closed were attacked by rioters. The general

situation shows considerable improvement. The BB & CI Railway are reported to be going on strike.

Karachi

RIN. 301 mutineers are under arrest and a few more strongly suspected are to be arrested. NOIC is posting Naval Liaison Officers to the camp to show the Navy is still interested in the ratings and Naval cooks are being supplied. All establishments except HMIS DILAWAR (Boys Training) are under military guard. There is still some apprehension about HMIS CHAMAK (Radar School). All POs and CPOs have remained loyal and most have done their best to restore order. HMIS TRAVANCORE has returned to harbour under her officers who have been in control throughout.

Internal Security. Situation in the town shows slight deterioration. The police have used tear smoke to disperse crowd 6000 strong. Troops are standing by.

Vizagapatam

RIN. The position is completely under control and no violence has occurred. Military guards have been placed on ships and establishments. No further trouble is expected except that a few men may refuse work.

Madras

The REME men at AVADI RESERVE BASE have returned to duty and the Commander anticipates no further trouble.

Andamans

RIN. Ratings below leading seamen of the sloop KISTNA ceased duty on 22 February in sympathy with RIN Bombay. No disorder has occurred and the men were expected to return to duty at noon today.

17. Ratings Begin Routine Duties

Director of Intelligence, HQ India Command: Situation Report No. 8, dated 24 February 1946.

File No. 5/21/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946).

Bombay

1. *RIN Ships.* On the majority of ships ratings are now starting to carry out normal routine duties. Military guards are being mounted on all ships today.

2. *RIN Establishments.* All shore establishments are similarly being put under military guard. There has been no further trouble except that 200 ratings of HMIS HAMIA refused to surrender and have been segregated.

3. *Internal Security.* Situation deteriorated and serious rioting occurred in Northern suburbs and mill area. One mill, one railway coach and railway station were burnt. The situation during the night was quiet.

Karachi

4. The civil situation remains unsatisfactory. Troops are patrolling the affected areas.

Allahabad

5. About 280 RIAF refused work but are giving no trouble.

Poona

6. 150 RIAF have refused to work but are giving no trouble.

Kalyan

7. Personnel of KALYAN Supply Depot have resumed work. One RIASC platoon (GT Coy) is under close arrest for collective insubordination.

Ferozepore

8. 700 civilian clerks of the military Finance Department went on strike owing to frivolous grievances. Situation is quiet and unlikely to spread.

Cochin

9. All RIN ratings have resumed work.

Stop Press

Calcutta

Ratings in Barracks are still on strike. They are not armed and have not shown violence. There is no guard on the Barracks. Ratings have withdrawn assurance that there would be no violence. The situation is uncertain. Preparations have been made to deal with any eventuality. Ratings of HMIS RAJPUTANA (ship) have struck but no trouble anticipated.

Bombay

In addition to the two officer casualties already reported total RIN ratings casualties to date are killed 1, wounded 13.

18. Localised Trouble Continues in Labour Neighbourhoods

Secraphone message received by Intelligence Bureau, Home Department, Government of India, from the Chief Intelligence Officer, Bombay, at 11 a.m. on 24 February 1946.

File No. 5/21/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India [NAI].

Situation in Bombay

By Saturday evening some of the previously troublesome areas, for instance Bhendi Bazaar, were comparatively quiet, although the situation was extremely difficult to deal with in the more thickly populated labour areas on the northern edge of the city. From even further out, at Khar, in the suburban area, an offence of arson was reported. However, the fact that the main disturbances were at last crystallising in areas from which unrest can usually be expected, and the apparent decrease of looting offences in the more prosperous areas, seemed to show that the crisis was over, especially when further Army and Police reinforcements arrived. The extension of the curfew area and the earlier commencement of the curfew at 7.30 p.m. were also calculated to simplify the task of the already severely tried Military and police personnel who have been endeavouring to maintain order.

2. The Police have had a gruelling time but have stuck it admirably. Without Military aid on the present large scale many police parties would probably have been overpowered and large areas left entirely to mob rule. Shooting is reported to have been good and ring-leaders have been shot as they appeared.

3. The Kohinoor Mill No. 3 was still on fire at 4.45 p.m. because the Fire Brigade could not get to it. The mill was again attacked later in the day.

4. Up to midnight on Saturday reported hospital figures were 187 dead and 1002 injured though the actual figures are probably considerably more as many of the injured do not go to hospital.

5. All sections of the riffraff of the city have been taking part in the disturbances. The Communists made capital out of the occasion by their early backing of the RIN mutineers. Two Communist women have been shot, one killed and the other wounded. This tends to show that they have been taking an active part. Flags of all political parties were seen at some of the demonstrations at the beginning of the trouble, but few are now seen, and, although other parties have tried to absolve themselves, the Communists have not done so. A Communist source admits that Communists are definitely involved.

6. The night was quieter with fewer incidents. The situation is easier today. A sign of improvement is that this morning fifteen mills are open, four fully and eleven partially. Local and through railway services are working today. Ahmedabad trains are carrying escorts. The looting of approved Government cloth shops was a new development yesterday evening. Kamatpina and Kala Chowki areas, where looting has been very serious, are predominantly populated by mill workers from Satara district most of whom have been taking part, and it is probable that Ninth Augusters have been inciting them to continue the disturbances. It is reported but not confirmed that violent mobs have been comprised of such mill workers as well as Communists. The heaviest Police firing yesterday was at Kala Chowki Police Station where the police fired 113 rounds rifle and 25 rounds revolver to disperse violent mobs surrounding and attempting to burn Lal Baug Police Chowki.

7. Up to yesterday the dock labourers had been working normally (though attendance was probably restricted by transport difficulties) as agitators had been kept away from the area.

8. The Police intend today to take measures to effectively clean up the northern area of the city.

19. Incidents of Arson in North Bombay

Telegram from Special Branch, Bombay, to Intelligence Bureau, Home Department, Government of India; 24 February 1946.

File No. 5/21/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India [NAI].

Serious disturbances continued on February 23rd in Northern part of Bombay. Violent mobs attacked and attempted to burn Matunga Station and 2 coaches of train burnt near Dadar Station both on BBCI. Wing of Kohinoor Woolen Mill burnt. Numerous grain and other shops looted. All mills closed and tram traffic stopped in mill area. Main road to Bandra barricaded in several places. BBCI suburban service interrupted but resumed in late afternoon. Casualties reported upto midnight on February 23rd 187 deaths and 1002 injured. Curfew hour extended from 7.30 to 6.30 over most of city. Quiet night and situation easier today. 15 mills open and no serious disturbance reported upto midday.

20. Muslim League Warns of Disaster in Bombay

Secraphone message received by Intelligence Bureau, Home Department, Government of India, from the Chief Intelligence Officer, Bombay, at 11 a.m. on 25 February 1946.

File No. 5/21/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India [NAI].

Situation in Bombay

Those taking part in the disturbances seem to have been surprised at the quick arrival of large numbers of troops in the city. Work was resumed normally in all mills this morning, but at the Edward Mill the Gahate weavers walked out again to the annoyance of the remaining workers in the mill. It is also possible that workers in the Tata Mill may cease work as they are restless about the position of night shifts tonight on account of the curfew.

Students were asked by the All India Students Congress to observe a hartal today in sympathy with the RIN, but Patel disapproved and they are apparently attending their schools.

About 1700 RIAF personnel in Bombay are still not working, but are remaining inside their establishments.

An important Muslim Leaguer has stated that he has never known such extreme bitterness in Bombay and that the disturbances prove that the Congress and the League no longer have any real control over the lower classes. The rich, he said, are now definitely afraid that should the food situation become acute their houses will be looted and there will be a disastrous orgy of mob violence in Bombay.

Patel is reliably reported to be pleased that the mills have resumed work again. He told Nehru not to come to Bombay and is extremely annoyed that he is coming. But he will be sent away again as soon as possible. Patel is also pleased that Aruna Asaf Ali has attacked Gandhi in the press as this may result in him taking effective action against her.

According to press reports, the RIN strike involving 500 ratings, continued in Calcutta yesterday. RIAF strikes in Madras and Allahabad and Lahore have been called off, as has the railway strike at Ahmedabad. The staff of the B&A Railway at Sealdah Station, Calcutta, resumed normal work yesterday. About a thousand RIAF personnel were reported to be on strike at Drigh Road, Karachi on the 23rd February.

21. Situation Under Control in Bombay

Director of Intelligence, HQ India Command: Daily Security Summary No. 90 (upto 0900 hours 25 February 1946), dated 25 February 1946.

File No. 5/21/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India [NAI].

Internal Security

1. Bombay. The situation is completely under control and all road blocks and barricades have been cleared. Fifteen mills have resumed partial working and Dockyard workers are expected to resume work today.

2. Karachi. The situation is quiet. The majority of troops have returned to barracks.

3. Madura. A hartal was observed on 22 February as a protest against Gandhi's support of Rajagopalachari. When the labourers of Pandyan Mills refused to join the demonstrators the mill compound was entered and the mill and police were stoned. The mob was dispersed with

tear smoke. There was no firing. An attempt was also made to burn the Communist Party's office. The situation is now normal.

Collective Indiscipline—3/15 Punjab Regt.

4. HQ, 8 Ind Div, in a report dated 19 Feb. 46, states that at 1600 hrs on 12 Feb. a party of 29 men of 3/15 Punjab Regt. Comprising L/Nks and 25 Sepoys, all BARAK KHATTAKS, approached the OC with the request that a BARAK KHATTAK Jemadar, who had been told by his CO [Commanding Officer] that he was to go on pension, should be retained.

On being ordered to dismiss, the party refused to do so unless the CO agreed to retain the Jemadar. They were put under arrest. A Court of Inquiry has been convened.

The remainder of the Bn is unaffected.

INA Holding Camps

5. The Comdt., H&E Centre, Jhingergacha, in a report dated 21 February states that all civilian Blacks held at Jhingergacha were despatched on 19 and 20 February with the exception of fifteen who were in an outstation hospital.

6. The Comdt, H&E Centre, Multan, in a report dated 19 February, states that "the situation is now normal and it is expected to remain so. The Court (PS 11) is again functioning and prisoners are willing to appear before it."

The report goes on to say that a letter making enquiries regarding the whereabouts of a sepoy captured by British forces on the Imphal front has been received signed by "G.S. Dhillon, Colonel, AHF [Azad Hind Fauj]." No reply is being sent.

22. Bombay Casualties: 228 Dead and 1046 Wounded

Telegram by Special Branch, Bombay, to Intelligence Bureau, Home Department, Government of India; dated 25 February 1946.

File No. 5/21/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India [NAI].

Situation in Bombay on February 24th very much improved. Apart from few isolated disturbances city was quiet. 29 persons injured on February 24th. Total casualties upto 9 a.m. on February 25th 228 deaths and 1046 injuries. On February 25th everything quiet upto noon. Mills working. Shops opened and normal conditions restored.

1.vi.c Disturbances in Karachi

1. Bombay RIN Unrest Spreads to Karachi

News report, 'RIN ratings in pitched battle with British.'

Free Press Journal, 22 February 1946.

Full details of the events that led today's development in RIN ratings strike in Keamari show that the ratings of various Shore Establishments in Karachi went on strike at 8.30 this morning on a twelve-point demand.

Their demands include speedy demobilisation, schemes for postwar resettlement, equality of pay and allowances with the personnel of Royal Navy, facilities for closer working with the

civilians, better food and treatment, improvement of welfare conditions, no victimization and accelerated promotions.

They also demand the release of Capt. Abdul Rashid and other INA prisoners.

Following the declaration of the strike this morning at 8.30 groups of strikers from the "Himalayas" and "Chamak" moved towards HMIS "Hindustan" and others along the Keamari Road.

Boat loads approached HMIS "Hindustan" lying alongside the east wharf, followed by batches—British soldiers on patrol vessels. When the strikers attempted to embark the vessel and Indian ratings aboard tried to contact them.

British Soldiers Open Fire

The British soldiers opened fire. The strikers aboard retaliated with all arms from heavy naval guns to small arms.

The strikers thereafter gained complete control of the vessel and prevented any one excepting Indian ratings from approaching the vessel. The strikers hoisted the Congress and League flags on the vessels.

Other groups moved out along the Road which was barricaded by the military police. Military pickets were stationed all over the area. The strikers were, however, persuaded to retire to their establishments, and are still holding a meeting to formulate their final demands, in the light of the recommendations said to have been made by the Area Commander RIN to the higher authorities.

An Ultimatum

Meanwhile HMIS "Hindustan" signalled an ultimatum demanding the withdrawal of the British Military from the area by 18:00 hours but it appears the strikers have extended the period pending the decision of the strikers meeting on "Chamak".

A prolonged exchange of signals between the Base Headquarters and HMIS "Himalayas" is said to be still on progress.—API.

2. RIN Ratings Open Fire from HMIS Hindustan

News report, 'Hindustan opens fire on Karachi.'

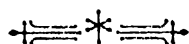
Free Press Journal, 22 February 1946.

The trouble in RIN has spread to Karachi where the ratings of the HMIS "Hindustan" which is lying alongside took control of the ship this morning and opened indiscriminate fire with all weapons at their disposal from 4 inch guns to small arms, says a communique issued by the General Headquarters India.

A number of ratings from Shore Establishments refused duty and took out a procession but others have remained quiet and some are working.

In other establishments here there has been no trouble.

—API.



3. Military Police Open Fire on HMIS Hindustan

Extracts from a news report, 'Military police fire at Karachi strikers.'

Free Press Journal, 22 February 1946.

Karachi, Feb. 21. Military Police opened fire this morning on strikers of HMIS "Hindustan" which is lying on the east wharf. The Indian ratings retaliated with two naval guns. Nine people were injured and one was killed....

4. End of Karachi RIN Uprising

Extracts from a news report, 'Ratings give up after 25 minute battle.'

Free Press Journal, 23 February 1946.

Karachi, Feb. 22. The RIN sloop HMIS "Hindustan" which on Thursday opened fire on British troops, was at 10.35 this morning subjected to heavy gunfire and shelling from British artillery mounted on the terrace of a nearby building.

The India ratings in the sloop returned the fire, but after a regular exchange of bullets and shells for over 25 minutes, when "Hindustan" caught fire, the ratings hoisted the white flag and surrendered. This ship's company fell in on the jetty and the ratings were arrested.

An official communique says that four Indian ratings were killed while twenty others were severely wounded. Two British officers have sustained injuries....

5. Diary of Karachi RIN Events

A day-to-day account by the Superintendent of Police, Sind CID. An undated copy is on file.

File No. 7/14/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India [NAI].

RIN Strike and Reactions

The RIN strike, which ended in open mutiny, and subsequent events in Karachi are reported below:

Wednesday, February 20th

Ratings of HMIS Hindustan went on strike as a protest against, according to a press report, the "insulting behaviour" of the captain and the Executive Officer. According to the same report about a dozen left the ship and went to the city, where they said they would not return to their ship unless the two officers who had used abusive language were transferred. During the day, ratings of HMIS Himalaya visited some hotels in Keamari and asked them to close down. Shouts of 'Jai Hind' and 'Inquilab Zindabad' were raised by them. Later, ratings from HMIS Hindustan went to Jackson Bazar (Keamari) shouting 'Jai Hind', 'Inquilab Zindabad' and 'Hindustan Azad' and about 150 ratings from HMIS Himalaya who said they were proceeding to Delhi, shouted 'Jai Hind' and other slogans en route to the Railway Station. By nightfall the majority of ratings had returned to HMIS Hindustan and no further incident occurred.

Thursday, February 21st

Excited ratings from HMIS Travancore brandishing hockey sticks and shouting revolutionary slogans contacted HMIS Hindustan and were joined by her ratings. At the same time two launches with ratings from HMIS Himalaya arrived on the scene and joined in the demonstration, which became ugly. Ratings from the launches boarded HMIS Hindustan, the ship's flag was torn down, the officers removed and the ship taken possession of by ratings, who manned her guns and opened fire in the air. Shortly after, fire was opened on the quayside and 2 BOR's wounded, one seriously. The fire was returned and the casualties inflicted, though light, had the desired effect. The ship ceased fire. Later, several hundred mutineers crossed the North Overbridge and marched, shouting slogans, towards Karachi. They were stopped by a Military picket and turned back. Fire from HMIS Hindustan besides wounding 2 BOR's damaged Embarkation buildings and injured two Indians in Keamari village.

No further incident of importance took place, except that ratings of HMIS Chamak held a meeting and sympathized with the mutineers, demanding the grant of their demands.

Friday, February 22nd

After a night without incident the day started with a rumour that Indian troops posted in the Embarkation buildings had refused food and were in sympathy with the mutineers. At about 7 a.m. 7 mutineers left the ship and surrendered. The mutineers were informed that military action would be taken to recover the ship unless they surrendered immediately and they were allowed till 9 a.m. to leave the ship, but no advantage was taken of the offer. At 10 a.m. the mutineers were called on to lay down their arms and surrender the ship, failing which action would be taken to seize the ship and any mutineers on deck would be fired on. In answer, the mutineers manned the ship's guns. At about 10.35 a.m., after the period of grace had elapsed, strictly controlled rifle fire was opened and the ship replied with heavy machine gun fire and later, opened up with the whole ship's armament including 4 inch guns. A single field gun and mortars then came into action. The ship stood about 5 minutes of this and then ran up a 'white' flag. Fire was stopped immediately, the mutineers disembarked and the ship taken over by a military detachment.

The total casualties during the RIN mutiny were, killed 8 RIN, wounded 37 RIN, 1 IOR, 3 BOR's and 3 Indians. A number of 4 inch shells fell in Karachi, but fortunately did little damage.

HMIS Travancore left harbour during the morning and RIAF personnel at Drigh Road struck work in sympathy with the mutineers.

Rumours were hatched and spread quickly. Crowds collected along the route taken by Service vehicles and stoned military trucks, despatch riders, and troops. Indian Military Police were hooted and jeered at and a number of British troops were hit by stones thrown, mostly by Hindus.

The *Hindu* published a Special Bulletin giving a highly coloured and false account of the "Hindustan" engagement, reporting that the ship had been set on fire by incendiary bombs.

M.H. Gazdar [President, Sindhi Muslim League; MLA], according to a press report, said that "unequal treatment to Indian officers and men (by the British) was the principal cause of the trouble. Indian ratings strongly felt the urge for freedom, so that they could get honourable treatment in their own country."

The *Hindu* and *Azad* presses closed down and the Karachi Municipal Corporation adjourned its meeting as a protest against the action taken by the Military.

Protest processions and meetings were held by Congress, students and Communists.

The Sind Students Congress assisted by prominent Congress leaders took out a well attended procession which was followed by a largely attended meeting. INA and abusive anti-British slogans were shouted by the processionists. The meeting was presided over by Swami Krishnanand. The speakers were Swami Krishnanand, Kishan Lulla, Sital, Devnathani, Ali Mohd. Makrani and R.K. Sidhwa. A resolution strongly condemning military action, sympathising with the victims and demanding an impartial enquiry, was passed. Anti-British speeches on the lines of the resolution were made in a marked anti racial strain. Another well attended students meeting was held outside the Law College. Kirat Babani, Kishan Lulla, Ali Mahomed Makrani and Mahomed Hafiz Qureshi were the speakers. A resolution similar to that adopted at the meeting reported above was passed and anti-British speeches on the lines of the resolution were made.

The Communist Party held a meeting at Id Gah the same evening. About 1000 persons attended. Sobho T. Gianchandani presided. Prominent Communists, who attended, were Sobho T. Gianchandani, Asafjab Karwani, Kazi Mahomed Mujtaba, Autar Kishan Angle, Santosh Kumar Dharmani, Govind Mali and Premsingh Haraksingh Gharwali. The speakers were Kazi Mujtaba, Karwani and Sobho T. Gianchandani. A resolution similar to those passed by Congress and students was adopted and strong anti-British speeches on the lines of the resolution were made in a provocative and dangerous anti-British strain. Mujtaba sarcastically remarked that the British who could not face the Germans, could shoot down Indians. Karwani, who spoke in a most objectionable strain, said that if the life of a single rating was taken, Indians would kill a thousand British. Sobho Gianchandani, who also spoke in an objectionable strain, said that Indians were proud of the rating who had faced bullets to uphold their prestige. They had proved to the British that the arms supplied them could be turned against the British. Indians had one weakness, they were unarmed while the ratings had been armed. They had done nothing because they had not been able to contact the ratings.

The speeches made had a visible effect on the audience. After the meeting it was announced that there would be a general *hartal* the following day, with processions in the morning and a mass meeting at the Id Gah at noon. The meeting would be held under the joint auspices of the Muslim League, Congress and the Communist Party. A similar programme was announced after the Congress meeting.

Saturday, February 23rd

Because of events the day previous, all processions and meetings were banned under 144 CrPC [Criminal Procedure Code] and two communist leaders, Gianchandani and Karwani arrested under 151 CrPC. Labour, mostly workshop, stayed out and Hindu students from schools and colleges, collected in small processions and groups, obstructed traffic and persuaded, peacefully or otherwise, shopkeepers to close their shops. Meanwhile a crowd of several thousands had collected at Id Gah where meetings were being held. Congress, League and Communist flags were prominent. The crowd on the maidan was moved back but collected again after the arrival of a Communist procession. Eventually tear gas had to be used, and this, for the time being, had the desired effect. Stone throwing which had commenced earlier now increased and several policemen were hit. Though the Id Gah maidan was clear of crowds, all efforts to disperse them peacefully from the locality failed and the crowd increased and resorted to violent stoning at every opportunity and without provocation. The situation went from bad to worse, leaders had no control over the mob and ultimately the police were forced to open fire,

which was strictly controlled. Hooliganism by students and loafers increased hourly, traffic was obstructed, Europeans, Anglo-Indians and government buildings stoned and people attacked and forcibly deprived of their hats and ties, which were burnt on the spot. A Police officer in a gharri [motor vehicle] was attacked by a crowd and would have been severely injured, if not killed, had not the attacking mob been dispersed by fire.

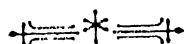
Towards evening it was considered essential to call out the Military in aid of the civil power and the prompt arrival of British troops had a sobering effect on the crowd, but heavy stoning continued despite their presence and a military truck driver (IOR) was so severely hit on the head that he collapsed. Not long before this incident a Dy Sp [Deputy Superintendent of Police], a Police Inspector and a constable were severely injured by brickbats. After the occupation of the Id Gah by the military, the mob broke up into several crowds, left the locality and directed its attentions elsewhere, attacking isolated police chowkies, post offices, other Government buildings and a European Bank, beating up stray Government servants and setting fire to letter boxes and in one case a sub-post office. A deal of damage was done but prompt patrolling by the Military quickly brought the situation under control and no incidents of serious nature were reported after 10 p.m. The Military, screened by police pickets held the Id Gah during the night of the 23rd/24th February. During the course of the day the police were forced to open fire, always controlled, on several occasions. In all, about 21 rounds were fired, 4 persons were killed and 22 injured. Tin hats and turbans saved many a policeman, nevertheless 14 sustained injuries requiring medical attention and 49 other received minor hurts. Santosh Kumar Dharmani was arrested under 151 CrPC during the course of the day and 10 others, mostly Hindu youths, were arrested under the Police Act for hooliganism. During the evening Kiki Bhen, Dr H.K. Kishinchand and one Hemandas, all Congressites, came to notice in the Ratan Talao area, where they were telling people that the police firing was unjustified and that Congress had approached the High Command for orders, which were awaited, before Congress took action.

The "VC" was very much in evidence on the 22nd and 23rd and started many maliciously false rumours, such as, that the "Hindustan" had been sunk by the British with 300 ratings on board, that the ship's Captain was an Irishman and in sympathy with the strikers, that the Military had fired on ratings first, that the Baluchis had refused to open fire at Keamair, that they had been disarmed in their lines and shelled by the British, that the Police firing had been indiscriminate and that the police had been bought over by increased rates of pay.

The situation at present is under complete control and quite quiet.

According to a Press report 450 RIAF personnel at Mauripur expressed their sympathy for the RIN ratings by fasting for 24 hours.

K.R. Eates.
Supdt of Police,
Sind CID.



1.vi.d Disturbances in Calcutta

1. Situation in Calcutta Made Worse by Bombay and Karachi RIN Unrest

Telegram from the Governor of Bengal to the Viceroy; dated 25 February 1946.

File No. 5/22/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India [NAI].

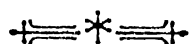
Orders under Calcutta and Calcutta Suburban Police Acts prohibiting meetings and processions throughout Calcutta police area without permission of Commissioner of Police were withdrawn on Thursday February 21st in view of return of conditions which were on surface normal and in order to facilitate legitimate electioneering. Situation however continues very uneasy as is inevitable with more than 400 RIN ratings in Calcutta area refusing work in sympathy with those at Bombay and Karachi, with news of mutiny and rioting in these two cities and with prospect of a mammoth election demonstration to be addressed by Jinnah on maidan yesterday Sunday (though we have been able to utilise moslems keen desire to hold this meeting undisturbed as a factor in favour of preserving peace). Another potential disturbing factor is hartal, now in its tenth day, against provincial sales tax. This is confined to Indian traders in Calcutta but it may lead to picketting of European shops and may also spread to district towns. It started as a protest against recent enhancement of rate from three-quarters an anna to 1 anna in a ruppe but has now taken form of demand for complete abolition of tax. As tax was imposed by Ministers as long ago as 1941 is out of the question.

Incidents symptomatic [symptomatic] of underlying uneasiness include the following none of which however actually led to any outbreak of rioting. On Friday February 22nd there was some stopping of trams and buses both in north and south Calcutta in sympathy with RIN and trams were taken off streets for some hours by Company as a precaution. Other transport remained unaffected.

On Saturday tramway workers went on what has proved to be a one-day strike, avowedly in support of RIN, and bringing out of staff at two main railway stations, Howrah and Sealdah, by leftwing elements prevented arrival and departure of trains on EIR and Assam Bengal Railway for most of the day. Except that in one suburban station there was half-hearted attempt to burn 3 railway coaches, there was no actual violence and police were not called on for active interference. Other transport remained unaffected. Efforts to tamper with other branches of labour and to stage big demonstrations failed. One line extremists are pursuing to try to provoke authorities to [take] repressive measures in hope of thereby being able to spread scope of any disturbance that may arise. We are wise to this and while our dispositions are taken to render possible an early display of power in any threatened area, police are being handled so as to avoid falling into this obvious trap.

Jinnah's meeting yesterday passed off peacefully and he himself seems to have been non-provocative.

My clear impression is that leaders of main parties are anxious to avoid disturbances at present but have their own difficulties in restraining students who are being incited by Communists. We must expect situation to remain uneasy in Calcutta and greater Calcutta area.



2. Calcutta RIN, RIAF Come out in Sympathy Against Bombay Firing

Extracts from an article, 'Protest against Bombay firing and India-wide repression.'

People's Age, 3 March 1946.

From Tuesday, February 19th, 400 RIN Ratings of the "Hooghly" Shore Establishment at Majerhat, Calcutta, went on strike in support of their Bombay comrades. Among them are people of different Provinces; most of them are Muslims.

They have formed a Ten-Man Strike Committee. Some of the members of the Committee in a statement issued on Thursday, Feb. 21, said; "There is no reason why the Government of India should make any discrimination between the Royal Navy and the Royal Indian Navy. The Indian Navy fought side by side with the Royal Navy and it was always on top whenever there was any competition."

The Strike Committee is in control of the entire "Hooghly" Shore Establishment and is maintaining perfect discipline and peace. In a meeting they strongly denounced the insolent Bombay order of the Flag Officer Commanding against the strike of their Bombay comrades and demanded its withdrawal.

They are also reported to have declared that if reprisals continue, they know how to give a fitting reply....

About 150 personnel of the Royal Indian Air Force stationed in Dalhousie Square, Calcutta, went on hunger-strike and struck work on Friday as a protest against the Police attack on the airmen's demonstration in Bombay....

From early morning of Friday, Feb. 22, the atmosphere in Calcutta has been tense. Everywhere, groups of people belonging to all sections—students, teachers in schools and colleges, pleaders and lawyers in Bar Libraries, clerks in banks, post offices, stations and business areas, workers, Hindus and Muslims, tram conductors, bus drivers, even Corporation sweepers—could be seen talking about the heroism of the Bombay Navy boys and resenting the insulting declaration of the Flag Officer Commanding. Many said that it was an insult to our entire country.

At midday, news spread like wildfire, about the Bombay strikers' appeal to the National leaders and of the general strike in Bombay. Boys and even grown-ups were seen stopping trams and buses, and appealing to passengers to get down. The mood of last week's Calcutta upheaval [upheaval] seemed to be coming back. Students in some schools spontaneously came out of their classes and there were clashes with the Police in Jogubabu Bazar. Trams were stopped on the Kalighat section, and by the evening traffic on other sections also stopped.

Armed Police began rushing about in trucks in the most provocative manner....

3. Calcutta Students, Workers Stage Huge Rally

Extracts from a news report, 'One lakh workers' protest strike against Bombay atrocities.'

People's Age, 3 March, 1946.

Sunday, February 24. One Saturday, February 23rd, over one lakh students and workers of Calcutta staged a remarkable demonstration expressing solidarity with the Naval Ratings and denouncing the Bombay Police and Military atrocities.

Nearly one lakh workers of the city and suburbs came out on sympathetic strike; there were many disciplined processions through the streets.

Trams observed complete strike though buses ran as usual. A host of schools and colleges were closed but those which were open were not attended at all. Even students of the Presidency College came out and hundreds of school children including many Muslims participated in the demonstration....

But most remarkable of all was the strike of the Railway workers, who practically for the first time in their history, took part in a National demonstration.

Loco workers of the Bengal & Assam (B&A) Railway at Sealdah first acted and they soon brought the clerical staff out too. The Traffic Control Office which remains open day and night was for the first time in its history seen under lock and key. The result was that the entire Railway traffic for a hundred miles from Calcutta was at a standstill. Except for two or three trains in the early morning, not a single train came to, or left, Sealdah, during the whole of Saturday....

In the evening at a huge meeting of the B&A Railway workers at Narkeldanga, Jyoti Basu, Communist leader of the Railway workers, declared that the protest strike was for one day and service would resume from the next morning.

Mass Rally Under Communist Auspices

There was a mass rally of workers and citizens called by the Bengal Committee of the Communist party at the Wellington Square presided over by Prof. K.P. Chattopadhyay. To the rally came marching processions of the worker-strikers and others from all parts of the city and suburbs, carrying Congress, League and Communist flags.

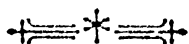
Somant Lahiri, Communist leader, explained that the strike for one day had been called to show solidarity with the Naval Ratings and to condemn the Bombay Police atrocities. He said: "The final battle is yet to come and the present strike is like a rehearsal before the final big battle. It has demonstrated that the working-class is in no mood to tolerate injustice to their fellow countrymen."

Chaturali, Communist worker-leader, made a powerful and moving speech denouncing the Imperialist insolence against our people and greeting the Naval Ratings and the brave workers of Bombay.

The rally unanimously condemned the Police and Military atrocities in Bombay and supported the just demands of the Naval strikers. It appealed to the Congress and League leaders to take up the cause of these brave men immediately....

Congress and League Leaders Keep Out

The Congress and the League did not participate at all in the hartal today nor have the Congress or League leaders yet issued a word of protest against the Bombay atrocities....



1.vi.e Disturbances in South India

1. RIN Deckhands Stop Work in Port Blair, Andaman Islands

Telegraphic report received by Intelligence Bureau, Home Department, Government of India, from Port Blair, Andaman Islands; dated 22 February 1946. [The document does not specify the sender of the telegram.]

File No. 5/18/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India [NAI].

In view present situation I report position here. RIN sloop KISTNA and 7 RIN minesweepers in harbour. Personnel of former below leading hand ceased duty as demonstration sympathy Bombay. No disorder and all essential duties being carried on. NFS informed by Indian DND Petty Officer that men will return duty orderly manner noon tomorrow. NFC is strongly of opinion incident likely pass off without violence if no reinforcements brought into port and most anxious reinforcements should not come into port. If general situation warrants I suggest for consideration precautionary measure moving RN ship within easy call but not (repeat not) into sight. No military forces now remain.

2. General Strike in Madras

Extracts from a news report, 'General strike in Madras.'

Free Press Journal, 26 February 1946.

Madras, February 25. There is a general strike of workers and students in the city today as a protest against military firing at Bombay and to express their sympathy with RIN ratings.

The tramway and motor transport workers, printing press workers and labourers in various workshops abstained from work this morning with the result that tram and bus services are completely at a standstill.

Hotels, restaurants and shops in most of the localities remain closed. Processions of workers and students organised by their respective organisations went through important thoroughfares peacefully. No incidents have so far been reported.

Representatives of Communist Party Provincial Trade Union, Congress and other Labour Organisations met last evening and resolved to declare one-day strike.

Representatives of Indian Students Congress and Madras Students Federation also met last evening when it is understood decisions were taken to observe hartal today. As a result of this, most of the students of various colleges and other educational institutions abstained from their classes today.

The workers of the suburban electric trains suspended work for about an hour from 11 a.m. with the result a large number of people proceeding to their respective offices had to return home. Normal suburban train traffic was however restored by about noon.

Procession

About 2000 students, including a good number of girl students, took out a procession at about 12.30 p.m. through the main roads of the city and the Central Station. The students were seen wearing badges which bore inscription "Strike for RIN". They also raised slogans like "Jai Hind", "Strike for the Ratings", as they marched through the roads. On the way they stopped a few motor cars and would not allow them to pass without writing such slogans as "Quit

India", "Strike for the RIN". The processionists held a meeting inside the High Court compound when resolutions were passed expressing sympathy with the RIN ratings and condemning the action of the police and military in having opened fire on them.

Except for an incident near the Central Station where the police resorted to lathi charge to disperse a mob which pelted stones at some military vehicles, the demonstrators were peaceful throughout....

3. Lathi Charge and Firing in Madras

Express letter from the Chief Secretary, Public (General) Department, Government of Madras, to Intelligence Bureau, Home Department, Government of India; dated Madras, 28 February 1946.

File No. 5/5/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India [NAI].

*Fort St. George,
28th February 1946.*

In response to the appeal issued by the Madras Branch of the Communist Party of India, the Madras Provincial Trade Union Congress and the Indian Students' Congress, there was a general strike and hartal in Madras City on 25th February 1946 in order to display sympathy with the RIN strike at Bombay and Karachi and in order to condemn police and military action in Bombay. Tramway workers, Binny's Beach Engineering Workers, Press Workers Spencer's whose unions are communists-controlled, struck work and formed processions calling upon others to follow suit. Buses which were running earlier in the morning also stopped service later. Shops were generally closed. The processions attracted hooligan elements who freely indulged in stone-throwing at passing vehicles and shop windows, etc. Lathi charges had to be made frequently to clear disorderly crowds, but the main procession and the meetings which followed were for the most part orderly. Workers of the Buckingham and Carnatic Mills stopped work in the afternoon and most of the educational institutions and business houses were closed. A mob set fire to the Marina bathing huts and stoned fire engines. A number of military and other motor vehicles were stoned in the Marina, Round Thana and Central Station areas and two motor cycles were set on fire. There was obstruction and stone throwing on the South Indian Railway suburban lines and the crowds were cleared by patrols. Later in the night there was considerable stone throwing in Mount Road by crowds which were repeatedly dispersed by lathi charges. In the Royapuram area, the Assistant Commissioner of Police on duty had to fire two rounds with his revolver to disperse a mob of hooligans. A European civilian is reported to have fired four rounds from his revolver killing one boy and wounding two others when his car was stoned by a crowd. The total number of persons admitted into the City hospitals for treatment in the day's incident are 78 of which 27 were police men, one was a serviceman, three were of the Madras Fire Services and 47 were civilians. Only 12 of these have been detained as inpatients.

Workers returned to work on 26-2-46 but there was some stone throwing in Washermanpet area and lathi charges had to be made. There was also a serious incident between Mambalam and Saidapet railway stations (south of Madras) where at on 26-2-46 at about 6-45 a.m. the Indo-Ceylon Express coming to Madras was stopped by a very large crowd which attacked the train with road metal picked from the permanent way and looted passengers' luggage. A police party which went to the spot was attacked with stones, and five muskets were seized by

the mob. In the meantime, an additional reserve party also arrived. The District Superintendent of Police who was present, warned the crowd that fire would be opened if they did not disperse in two minutes. As they did not disperse and continued to be violent, fire was opened. 17 rounds were fired. The fire was effective and the crowd dispersed. Three persons with gun shot wounds were picked up and sent to hospital, and a number of other arrests were made. 15 police men including the District Superintendent of Police, an Inspector and a Sub-Inspector received injuries during the incident. The muskets which were taken away have since been recovered. The situation is now quiet.

Govindan Nair.
for Chief Secretary to Government.

4. Riots in Conjeevaram, Tamil Nadu, in Support for RIN Mutineers

Copy of a letter from the Stationary Sub Magistrate, Conjeevaram, to the District Magistrate, Chingleput, Saidapet, and forwarded by the latter to the Chief Secretary, Government of Madras; dated 1 March 1946.

File No. 1867; Public (General) Department, Government of Madras (1946) (Tamil nadu State Archives).

This morning about 150 pupils of the Pachaiappahs High School did not attend the classes. In a body, they came to the Anderson High School, Conjeevaram, carrying Congress Flags and crying "Mahatma Gandhi Ki Jai". They exhorted the pupils of the Anderson High School at about 10.30 a.m. to abstain [abstain] from attending the classes. They stationed themselves just at the entrance of the School, finding that their exhortation was of no use they withdrew from the School compound which is also situated in the Taluk Office compound. Till about 5 p.m. in the evening these pupils and some more members of the general public aimlessly wandered about Conjeevaram Town. At about 5.30 p.m., I got intimation through a Police Constable named Muthialu that a crowd of one thousand had gathered at Hodgsonpet and that they were moving about Rangasamikulam calling on the shopkeepers to close down the shops for the day and observe hartal. They succeeded in causing closure of the shops and I understand that when the shop of one Pachaiappah a Mudaliar was kept open they pelted stones. From now on the crowd became unruly and were marching about Hodgsonpet. On receipt of information I came to Office. Just as I was in office I got a report from HC [Head Constable] 682 Manicka Naicker that a crowd was going towards Retaimandapam via Kannan Talkies and that the crowd wanted to hold a meeting at Retaimandapam. As the Sub Inspector of Police Vishnu Conjee is absent at Saidapet and as the Senior Officer of the Police Station, he informed me that in event of need for any orders from me he would send word. At about 7.45 p.m. while I was at the Taluk Office along with the Tahsildar, the Sub Inspector of Police Siva Conjee who had assumed command of bundobast sent word to me through the Sanitary Inspector Janakiram that my presence was urgently required at Hodgsonpet and at the Kannan Talkies. He did not tell me the purpose for which I was wanted. I and the Tahsildar left Taluk Office and proceeded to the spot. At Hodgsonpet we found only groups of men but did not find any crowd engaged in pelting stones or in causing disturbances. We proceeded along the Market and while going near the Kannan Talkies we found lot of stones scattered on the streets

and on the pavement of the cinema. About 100 feet away from the Talkies we found the SI [Sub Inspector] of Police, Siva Conjee. We found [him] in the midst of 30 persons. On seeing us he informed us that the crowd was then gradually melting, that huge crowd had gathered near the Ration Office, that the Ration Office had been set fire to, that fire engines are urgently required, that the crowd had been very severely pelting stones. With available forces of one Sub Inspector, one Head constable and six constables, myself and Tahsildar proceeded to the spot to put down the fire. We immediately sent word to the Fire Engines to be brought to the scene. When we were coming within a furlong of the Ration Office at East Raja Street we found a large crowd. The Fire Engines which went ahead of us returned feeling that they could not advance any further because of the heavy stones thrown by the mob from all sides and even from the back lanes and bylanes. From a distance of $\frac{1}{2}$ a furlong, the crowd began to hit us with stones. Unmindful of it we gradually approached the Ration Office but the stone throwing became very heavy and at a distance of 100 feet to the Ration Office we found it extremely difficult to approach the Ration Office as there was continuous outpour of stone throwing. I was hit on the forehead in two places with cries "British Ekadipatyam Oliga". The Tahsildar was hit severely with a brickbat on the left forearm. The watch which he was wearing on his left wrist was broken to pieces, simultaneously he got the hurt. Stones hit him on the knee and ankle of the left leg. The Police got similar attack by stones. We again tried to get at the Ration Office. The crowd again began to rush in advance from all sides crying "British Egathibatyam Oliga". The crowd gathered were not less than 1000. With the Ration Office burning, and fearing that we might [be able] to put down the fire with the help of the fire engines which were summoned by us, the crowd wanted to encircle us. As the situation at this time very serious and the crowd was rushing on us on all directions, I directed the Police to open fire. Accordingly three rounds were fired by two constables and no one was hit or injured by this firing. After the first round had been fired we advanced towards the Ration Office and saw flames escaping through a window on the Railway Station Road. Again the crowd began to pelt stones with greater severity, cutting off our advance either in front or rear. Again two rounds had to be fired as we were in imminent danger of being killed on the spot by the mob, when the first round was fired, the crowd began to withdraw through the Kamatchia at Sannadhi Street. We waited at the spot for fifteen minutes and sent word to the fire engine again. In the meanwhile we got information that the crowd was going towards Taluk Office. Fearing that the next target of attack would be Taluk Office, I and the Tahsildar with the three PCs [Police Constables] came to Taluk Office and to guard the sub Treasury. The SI of Police and the remaining Police had taken the fire engines to the Rationing Office to put down the fire as the situation had come under the control then.

I beg respectfully to submit that the crowd were bent upon destroying Government Offices and their attack on the Rationing Office was a step taken first. As a result of the firing I have been able to not only to prevent the mob from killing us on the spot but also made it possible for putting down the fire. All the efforts taken by me and the Tahsildar to pacify the crowd proved ineffective.

I shall submit further report soon. (Time of report 9.30 PM.)

(True Copy). I am proceeding to Conjeevaram.

Illegible.
2.3.46.
for District Magistrate.

5. Police Fire on Conjeevaram Rioters

Extracts from a copy of a report by the Deputy Superintendent of Police, Chingleput, to the District Magistrate, Saidapet, and forwarded to the Chief Secretary, Government of Madras; dated 2 March 1946.

File No. 1867; Public (General) Department, Government of Madras (1946) (Tamil Nadu State Archives).

... 3. The arrack shop at Chettikulam belonging to renter Paraswamy Pillai of Madras, which contains about 20 gallons of arrack worth about Rs 500 was set on fire and destroyed by the hooligans.

4. The backyard portion of the Ration Office in East Rajah street was the scene of the main attack by the mob, who set fire to the records, broke open window, pulled out the window bars and caused considerable damage. This incident occurred between 8.45 and 9.30 p.m. on 1-3-46. The fire was extinguished by the Madras Fire Service and the mob dispersed by the SI [Sub Inspector] Siva Conjee under orders of the Sty Sub Magistrate, Conjeevaram by opening of fire in self-defence.

5. The lock and chain of the level crossing gate at Conjeevaram were broken by the mob who looted the Godown No. 2 of the Wholesale Co-operative Stores situated at Kannilaram Choultry where five bags of rice were removed, cut open and ripped and the rice strewn all over the area on the front verandah and on the road. The door of the godown was forced open.

6. The mob then set fire to the sugar molasses stocked in a corner of No. 1 Godown of the Wholesale Cooperative Stores near the Rice Mill of Palani Swamy Mudaliar and attempted to set fire to a portion of the building. The fire was put down by the Madras Fire Services....

10. On 2-3-46 the Ration Office was again attempted to be set fire to and some records and furniture brought out through the open backyard door and set fire to. The mob swelled in large numbers, number [ing] about 5000 from about 8 a.m. and resorted to violence by throwing of brickbats and stones from various directions from behind houses and topes [housetops] and refused to disperse in spite of repeated warnings and lathi charges. Finding the situation uncontrollable and the mob hemming in on all sides ... from streets and bylanes and mainly in East Rajah Street and as severe open stone pelung commenced from the main street by the raiders, the Sub-Magistrate permitted the issue of order to open fire....

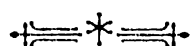
12. ... The cause of the disturbances appear to be as follows:

- (1) The reduction of ration from 16 to 12 ounces.
- (2) The issue of 4 ounces of wheat instead of rice to millet eaters.
- (3) The bad quality of Siam rice supplied to the rationing areas in Conjeevaram.

13. The main body of rioters consist of Naikers, Sengundars and many young boys are being instigated to acts of mischief, stone pelting and incendiarism. The Municipal Chairman is taking prompt steps to pacify the crowds and disperse them by peaceful methods of persuasion.

14. Armed Police parties are patrolling the affected area and are being used in full sections.

15. There is great difficulty in procuring food for the men of the armed Reserves and the hotels which supplied food to the Policemen this afternoon were attacked and looted in the evening by the rioters. The Officers and men are suffering untold hardship without rest, water and food. Suitable arrangements are being made to attend to their ordinary conveniences....



6. Madras Hartal in Protest Against Bombay Firing

Extracts from a report, 'Madras workers', citizens' protest strikes, hartal.'

People's Age, 3 March 1946.

Madras City observed complete hartal today to protest against the Police firing in Bombay and to support the demands of the Indian Naval Ratings. At the Press Workers' Conference held yesterday, the workers resolved to go on strike today....

7. Four Killed in the Conjeevaram Firing

Express letter by Chief Secretary, Public (General) Department, Government of Madras, to Intelligence Bureau, Home Department, Government of India; dated Madras, 5 March 1946.

File No. 5/5/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India [NAI].

*Fort St. George,
5th March 1946.*

Serious riots reported from Conjeevaram, Chingleput District on 1st and 2nd March 1946 necessitating opening of fire by the Police. At 10 a.m. on 1st March, 1946, students of local Pachaiyappas High School organised a procession to display sympathy with strikers in the other parts like Bombay and Madras and went about the streets shouting slogans and announcing a meeting to be held that evening. At about 5.30 p.m., a crowd of about 1000 gathered at Hodgsonpet and began moving towards the meeting place calling on shopkeepers to close down their shops and observe hartal. A shop which remained open and the "Kannan Talkies" were stoned by hooligans and forced to close down. The mob afterwards damaged the doors and windows of the Rationing Office and set fire to some records. The Police and Magistrates who arrived on the scene were attacked with stones and were prevented from approaching the building. The crowd at this time numbered about 2000. As the Police were in grave danger of being overpowered, fire was opened under instructions of the Magistrate. No information regarding casualties. The mob dispersed and this opportunity was taken to put down the fire in the rationing office. The same night, other crowds set fire to an arrack shop and about 20 gallons of arrack costing about Rs 500 was destroyed. They next looted the rice bags stored in the Chingleput District Cooperative Wholesale Stores Godown, broke the chain and lock at the railway station level crossing, set fire to a heap of sugarcane crushed stumps stored in another Cooperative stores godown and burnt a ration chowki post nearby. Early on the morning of the 2nd, a mob again broke into the ration office, removed furniture and records and set fire to them. The Police and the Magistrates were pelted with stones and a number of them were injured. The Crowd at this time numbered about 5000. As Lathi Charges had no effect and as it was feared that the situation might get out of control, fire was again opened on the orders of the Sub-Magistrate. Altogether 16 rounds were fired as a result of which four person[s] died and some more were seriously injured. At about 3.30 p.m. another huge crowd armed with long casuarina poles collected in West Raja Street. In the meantime, the Sub-Magistrate had issued an order under Section 144, Criminal Procedure Code prohibiting the assembly of five or more persons in Conjeevaram town or elsewhere in the Conjeevaram taluk. This was made known to the crowd who however refused to disperse and continued throwing stones at the

Police. Retail ration shops in various localities were looted and the rice, in particular, Siam rice, was brought into the street and destroyed. By this time further reinforcements of Police had arrived in the town and on news of this being known, the crowds dispersed. Some men suspected of acts of incendiarism and hooliganism have been taken [in] to custody. All the main streets in the town are now being patrolled by the Police. The situation is now quiet. Enquiries show that the disturbances which were originally started in sympathy with happenings in other parts like Bombay, Madras, etc., gathered additional strength on account of reduction in the quantity of rice ration and issue of certain qualities of rice not liked by the people. The total loss and damage to grain is estimated at about Rs 6833.

A telegraphic report has also been received of another serious incident in Cheyyar in the North Arcot District where following the issue of raw rice instead of boiled rice a mob numbering about 4,000 attacked the Taluk Supply Officer and the Tahsildar and injured the former. Fire had to be opened resulting in the death of one person. Further details are awaited.

Govindan Nair.
for Chief Secretary to Government.

8. Shooting Incident Involving Justice Byers

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Madras Province for the second half of February 1946.

Fortnightly Reports; Public (General) Department, Government of Madras (1946) (Tamil Nadu State Archives).

General

The RIN Mutiny in Bombay and Karachi and the consequent disturbances have been the main topic of interest. In Madras city about 85 ratings attached to the HMIS "Adyar", struck work on the 21st February in sympathy with the Bombay ratings, and went round the city in procession shouting slogans. One of the ratings assaulted an officer, but they were all finally prevailed upon to return to their barracks and resume work. In Vizagapatam there was a more serious demonstration and a number of strikers who did not return to the Naval base after the first day were arrested and held in military prison. Others who struck work on the ships were also taken to the prison, the total number confined being about 350; half this number were later taken back to resume normal duties in ships and on the shore, while the remainder continue under military guard in the Transit Area. Things have more or less returned to normal, and the RIN personnel are being given shore leave again though only in one batch at a time.

Law and Order

The major events of this fortnight have been the hartal in the City on 25th February 1946 as a sign of sympathy with the RIN mutineers which was accompanied by an outbreak of hooliganism and violence of a kind, rarely witnessed in Madras. The strike was engineered by a number of local trade unions, most of them controlled by the Communist party. On 24th February 1946 at the Annual Conference of the Madras press Labour Union, A.S.K. Iyengar, one of the Communist leaders, called upon the workers to declare a one day strike the next day, as a mark of protest against the police firing in Bombay. Leaflets were issued immediately under the signature of the leaders of a number of local labour unions. The next day the Tramway

workers, the Press Workers, workers of Binny & Cos Beach Engineering workshops, and other unions all controlled by Communists, struck work and went round the city in procession calling upon others to follow suit. Most of the shops closed down and public transport was suspended. Workers of the Buckingham and Carnatic Mills stopped work in the afternoon and practically all colleges and schools were also closed. The main procession and the meetings were at first orderly, but they soon attracted the hooligan element in the City, who started pelting stones at passing vehicles and shop windows. Frequent lathi charges had to be made to clear the disorderly crowds. In the Royapuram area the Assistant Commissioner of Police had to fire two rounds from his revolver, while near the Marina an unruly crowd set fire to the Marina Canteen bathing huts and stoned a fire engine that came to put out the fire. A number of military and other motor vehicles were stoned in the Marina, Round Tana, and Central Station areas, and two motor cycles were set on fire.

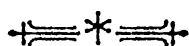
There was a very unfortunate incident in this connection, when Mr Justice Byers of the Madras High Court, who was returning from Court, fired three rounds from his revolver at the crowd killing one and wounding two others, when his car was stoned near the Fort area. The occupants in the car were hit by stones and the car was also damaged, but they managed to get away safely.

Workers returned to work on 26th February 1946 and there were only a few stray cases of stone throwing in the City but a serious disturbance took place in the morning, when a crowd estimated at about 10,000 gathered at a level crossing gate near Saidapet, just outside the City limits, stopped the Indo-Ceylon Express, which was coming into Madras, and attacked the train, stoning the passengers and looting their luggage. A small police party, which rushed to the scene, was attacked and five muskets snatched away. Reinforcements arrived immediately under the District Superintendent of Police, Chingleput. As the crowd refused to disperse, the police opened fire. In all 17 rounds were fired and three persons in the crowd with gun shot injuries who were sent to hospital died later. A number of policemen and passengers were injured by the stone throwing.

A number of arrests have been made in connection with the disturbances. The strikes themselves were organised by the Communists but the actual hooliganism appears also to have been engineered. Practically all the culprits were street urchins, who were incited and directed by some organisation behind the scene. The police have been asked to make every effort to uncover the organisation actually responsible.

A similar strike took place the same day in Trichinopoly, also under the direction of Communists, but it passed off peacefully. In Madura there was a strike and hartal on the 27th, but except for the stoning of trains there was no serious trouble.

Congress leaders have condemned this hooliganism and Mr Kamaraj Nadar, especially has issued a statement expressing official Congress disapprobation. Congressmen, especially the more moderate have evidently begun to realise the danger of violence involved in such indiscriminate strikes and hartals. It is interesting to note the *Mathru Bhoomi*, a strongly nationalist paper of Malabar, observing in this connection "atrocities are increasing in the country from the people as well as from the Government. Such atrocities will be dangerous in the end."



9. Cheyyar, Tamil Nadu, Crowd Burns Down Rice Depot

Express letter from the Chief Secretary, Public (General) Department, Government of Madras, to Intelligence Bureau, Home Department, Government of India; dated Madras, 19 March 1946.

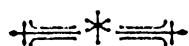
File No. 5/5/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India [NAI].

*Fort St. George,
19th March 1946.*

Following detailed report regarding the disturbances in Cheyyar and Tiruvattipuram is furnished. Trouble started at about 8 a.m. on 3rd March 1946 when about 200 persons gathered in front of the wholesale rice depot at Cheyyar, assaulted two servants of the depot keeper and attempted to remove rice bags, alleging that rice produced in the local area was being sent outside and foreign rice of inferior quality—and that too only raw rice as against their requirement of boiled rice—was being sold. The Sub Divisional Magistrate and the Sub Inspector of Police proceeded to the spot with two head constables and seven constables.

By that time, the crowd had moved to a village Tiruvattipuram, a mile from Cheyyar and began to attack the house of the Taluk Supply Officer. The crowd numbered about 4,000. The Tahsildar, and the Sub Magistrate joined the Sub Divisional Magistrate there. The mob started pelting stones and removing tiles from the house of the Taluk Supply Officer. The Sub Divisional Magistrate advised the mob to withdraw and represent their grievances in the proper way but in vain. Stone throwing increased and the Taluk Supply Officer when he came out was hit on the head and rendered unconscious. Stones were also pelted on the Sub Divisional Magistrate and the Police party. A lathi charge was ordered but it proved ineffective. The Tahsildar was pelted with stones and when he took shelter in an adjoining house, the mob attacked this house also. They seized two cycles belonging to the police and burnt them. The Sub Divisional Magistrate warned the crowd not to indulge in violence but it only became more defiant and continued to throw stones. The Sub Divisional Magistrate, the Sub Inspector and several constables were hit and as the mob grew more violent and stone throwing became more intense, the Sub Divisional Magistrate ordered the police to open fire. Eleven rounds in all were fired as a result of which one person (the ring leader) was killed and four others injured. The crowd then melted away. The local police have been patrolling the area. On the request of the Sub Divisional Magistrate, the Officer Commanding, the West African Unit doing jungle clearance at Sennaleri, ten miles from Cheyyar, dispatched a party of West Africans under an Officer. They stood by in the Taluk Office and the Treasury and returned to their Unit after the Reserve Police Party from Vellore arrived. No incident has been reported afterwards. The situation is now well in hand and the place is now quiet.

Govindan Nair.
for Chief Secretary to Government.



10. Congress, Communists Differ Over Conjeevaram and Cheyyar Unrest

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Madras Province for the first half of March 1946.
File No. 18.3/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India [NAI].

Law and Order

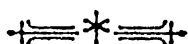
There were two serious incidents this fortnight. On 1st March 1946, there was a hartal and a procession by local High School students in Conjeevaram Town, Chingleput District, organised as a sign of sympathy with the strikes in Bombay and Madras. In the evening a large crowd gathered, started stoning shops and later attacked the rationing office and set fire to the furniture [and] records. The Police and the Sub Magistrate who arrived on the [spot] were heavily stoned and they had to open fire. The mob dispersed then, but next morning there was a recrudescence of the trouble, and a crowd numbering about 5000 again attacked the Ration Office and the Police had to open fire, as a result of which four persons were killed and some others seriously injured. In the course of the riots the crowd looted a number of rice ration shops and a certain amount of foreign rice was destroyed, the total damage being estimated at about Rs 6800.

The disturbances appears to have originated in the hartal, but gathers momentum later from the prevailing discontent with the cut in rations and the alleged bad quality of certain imported stocks of foreign rice.

The second incident was at Cheyyar in North Arcot on 3rd March 1946 and appears to have gained its initiative from the Conjeevaram riot. A crowd attempted to loot a wholesale rice depot and then attacked the Taluk Supply Officer and the Tahsildar. The Sub Divisional Magistrate and the Police, who came to their rescue were heavily stoned and received minor injuries. Eleven rounds had to be fired, as a result of which one of the rioters (the ring leader) was shot dead and four others injured.

Minor hartals involving mainly school boys have been reported from two or three places all in sympathy with the RIN strikers in Bombay and Madras. Except in Virudhunagar, where there was some stone throwing, there were no outbreaks of violence....

While responsible Congress Leaders continue to deplore the disturbances, Communists have not hesitated to exploit the situation to the extent of extolling those killed or injured by Police action as martyrs; and in Madras City they have set up a Defence Committee to afford relief and legal advice to those arrested by the Police in this connection. A number of meetings have also been held demanding the arrest of Mr Justice Byers, who shot and killed a boy and injured another on 25th February 1946 when his car was attacked by a mob. The Government have ordered a full Police investigation into this case which is now proceeding.



11. Madras to Shift Justice Byers' Trial to Calcutta

Extracts from letter by K. Ramunni Menon, Chief Secretary, Public (General) Department, Government of Madras, to the Secretary, Home Department, Government of India, dated Madras, 8 April 1946.

File No. 5/5/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India [NAI].

*Fort St. George
8th April 1946.*

Sir,

... It has transpired that the European civilian who was reported to have opened fire is Mr J.A. Byers, a Judge of the High Court at Madras.

2. The fact are briefly as follows:

At about 4.30 p.m. on the 25th February 1946, a crowd collected near the Fort railway station which is about two furlongs from the High Court buildings and some of them indulged in a somewhat wild and tumultuous behaviour. They threw stones and sticks at cars passing along the road in which Europeans were seen. When Mr J.B. Byers was returning home from the High Court, his car (which he himself was driving) was several times hit with stones and sticks and he, apprehending danger to his life, whipped out his pistol and fired three rounds in the direction of the crowd and caused the death of a boy aged about 18. The local Police who were in charge of the investigation have recently laid a charge sheet against Mr Byers under Section 304 IPC before the Chief Presidency Magistrate, Madras.

3. The incident has given rise to considerable agitation both in the Press and outside and His Excellency the Governor of Madras considers that in the interests of justice it is desirable that Mr Byers, if he should be committed to take his trial in the High Court, should be tried in a High Court outside the Province, preferably in the High Court at Calcutta. His Excellency has accordingly decided to transfer the case, if it is committed to sessions, to the Calcutta High Court under Section 527, Criminal Procedure Code, and the Government of Bengal are being addressed for their agreement to the proposed transfer.

K. Ramunni Menon.
Chief Secretary to Government.

12. Madras Government Urged to Withdraw Prosecutions in Connection with Riot

Memorandum submitted by R. Subbier, Congress MLA (Chingleput), and E. Venugopal Reddy, President, Chingleput District Congress Committee, to the Government of Madras; dated 10 May 1946.

File No. 1867; Public (General) Department, Government of Madras (1946) (Tamil Nadu State Archives).

On the 1st and 2nd of March 1946, there were disturbance at Conjeevaram on account of the rotten rice supplied and on account of reduction in the rice proportion of the rations supplied when, it is alleged some ration shops were burnt and certain ration articles were thrown into the streets. Police resorted to firing twice and 4 persons including a child died as a result of the firing. A number of prosecutions have since been launched against several persons some of

which are pending before the special First Class Magistrate of Chingleput and some others before the Stationary Sub Magistrates of Chingleput and Conjeevaram.

At the time, the food position at Conjeevaram became acute. The quality of ration rice was thoroughly bad and unfit for human consumption. Added to it, the proportion of rice in the daily ration was reduced to a third while the balance was to be in ragi or cholam. This reduction was not sufficiently published or explained to the people who were under the impression that this was merely the trick of the shopkeepers. An already tense situation was rendered dangerous and explosive. Excitement and emotion ran high. The representations made to ration authorities as to the quality of rice were not heeded. In the circumstance the people resorted to this stupid action. Had the situation been handled tactfully from the beginning, the disturbances could have been avoided. The officers on the spot were only probationary officers and inexperienced.

It is submitted that whatever happened at a time of great excitement and nervous strain. It must be regarded as the protest of an angry and helpless people against conditions which rendered their existence precarious.

Now that a popular ministry is in charge of the administration, it is necessary to mobilise public opinion and support in its favour. A peaceful atmosphere has to be created for the smooth working of the Government's food policy regarding procurements and distribution. It is necessary to associate non-official agency in the schemes to be carried out and secure the cooperation of the public in ever increasing measure. To secure these results it is necessary to remove all bitterness and frustration from public mind. It will not be conducive to the proper atmosphere required to keep the prosecutions cited above pending.

It is therefore urged that all the prosecutions pending or likely to be launched hereafter in connection with the food troubles that occurred at Conjeevaram on the 1st and 2nd of March this year be withdrawn and early orders issued to that effect.

R. Subbier.

10/5/46.

E. Venugopal Reddy.

13. Ratings of HMIS Circars in Vishakhapatnam on Strike

News report, 'Vizag RIN men declare strike.'

Free Press Journal, 23 February 1946.

Vizagapatam, Feb. 22. About 600 ratings of the RIN belonging to HMIS "Circars" and other units struck work in sympathy with the strikers in Bombay and Calcutta. They marched in a procession with the Congress Tricolour flag and shouting "Jai Hind", "Inquilab Zindabad" and "Netaji Ki Jai", through the main road to the RAF Camp.

The strikers demand release of INA men without trial, withdrawal of Indian troops from Indonesia, equal pay and status between RIN and RN men and better treatment.—API.

14. Communist Support for Vishakhapatnam RIN Strikers

Extracts from a news report, "Naval ratings strike"

People's Age, 3 March 1946.

Vizagapatam, Feb. 23. The Navy boys of Vizagapatam (Andhra) struck work from Feb. 21 for their rightful demands. All 600 of them demonstrated on the streets of the town. The strike is

continuing. About 300 of the Ratings were arrested on Feb. 22 and all Naval officers [offices] were cordoned off by the Military. No one was allowed to move out.

A largely attended public meeting under Communist auspices, addressed by Communist leaders Vijab Kumar and Ramalingayya, condemned the arrest of the 300 Navy boys. A demonstration with placards reading "Release the arrested Navy boys", "Concede their demands", "Down with Imperialism", "Condemn firings", attracted the attention of thousands....

15. South Indian Railway Workers Down Tools and March on Tiruchirappally

Extracts from a news report, 'One lac workers' strike and rally.'

People's Age, 3 March 1946.

Trichinopoly 26.2.46. February 25 was a great day for Trichinopoly (Tamilnad) when the entire working-class here demonstrated its protest against the repression let loose on the RIN men and the people of Bombay.

In the South Indian Railway colony of Golden Rock, 5000 workers, 500 clerks and 200 sweepers struck work on the call of the Communist Party. In the morning the four gates of the Railway workshop were picketed. About thirty worker-women stood with Red Flags before each gate and not a single honest worker went in. A mile and a half long procession, 5000 strong, started from the SI Railway Workers' Union grounds of Trichy town, with huge flags of all parties.

All shops and hotels were closed in Golden Rock.

Trichinopoly has never seen such a day in its history. The entire working-class downed tools. No shop was open. Transport in Trichy and Srirangam area, was at a standstill. Streams of workers' processions came from all ends of the town....

1.vi.f Aftermath: Official Sources

1. Viceroy Seeks Home Department's Views Regarding Court-martial of RIN Mutineers

Letter by G.E.B. Abell, Private Secretary, Viceroy, to A.E. Porter, Secretary, Home Department, Government of India; dated New Delhi, 1 June 1946.

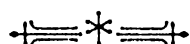
File No. 21/8/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India [NAI].

New Delhi, 1st June 1946.

My dear Porter,

HE, as you know, is interested in the proposals to try certain RIN mutineers by Court Martial and he has asked War Department to send you summaries of the evidence. He would be grateful if you would have these examined as soon as possible and let him know whether you have any particular comments to make, specially as regards the probable political repercussions of the trials.

G.E.B. Abell.



2. Home Department: Courts-martial of Mutineers Impolitic

Extracts from copy of a letter by A.E. Porter, Secretary, Home Department, Government of India, to G.E.B. Abell, Private Secretary, Viceroy; dated New Delhi, 6 June 1946.

File No. 21/8/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India [NAI].

New Delhi, 6th June 1946.

My dear Abell,

... I received yesterday circumstantial letters and summaries of evidence in respect of four proposed Naval Courts Martial. Two of these relate to the disturbances in Karachi and two to the mutiny in Bombay. A brief indication of the charges against each of the eight accused concerned is given below.

(1) Anil Kumar Roy: he is charged with taking a leading part in the mutiny in HMIS Chamak and with using indisciplined and contemptuous behaviour to superior officers.

(2) Hira Lal: he is charged with taking a prominent part in the mutiny in HMIS HIMALAYA with disobedience of legal orders and with striking an officer.

(3) Akbar Ali: he is charged, in the course of the mutiny in HMIS HIMALAYA, with using violence to an officer and behaving in an insubordinate and contemptuous manner to an officer.

(4) Sheikh Shahdat Ali: he is charged with taking a leading part in the mutiny on HMIS Dalhousie, including inciting others to mutiny and using insulting behaviour to an officer.

(5) Maherban Shah: he is charged with taking a leading part in the mutiny in HMIS Dalhousie, inciting others to mutiny, using violence and insulting behaviour to an officer and acting prejudicially to discipline and good order by carrying arms without authorization.

(6) S.N. Misra: he is charged with taking a leading part in the mutiny in HMIS DALHOUSIE and with inciting others to mutiny.

(7) Basant Singh: he is charged with taking a leading part in the mutiny in HMIS DALHOUSIE, with leading a mutinous assembly, inciting others to break open cells and acting in a manner prejudicial to discipline and good order by carrying arms without authorization.

(8) Lt H. Sobhani: he is charged with taking part and being a ring leader in the mutiny in HMIS HANLA, with inciting others to mutiny, with behaving in a contemptuous manner to a superior officer, with leading a mutinous assembly and with a number of subsidiary offences, e.g., leaving the ship without orders, being absent without leave, driving naval transport without authorization and being improperly dressed.

2. I have read through the summaries of evidence in each of these cases. In the case of Sobhani it is possible that the defence taken may be that his motive for the action taken by him was to prevent the ratings from getting out of hand, to keep them in bounds and to see that demonstrations were conducted non-violently: such a defence, if taken, would obviously depend upon admitting very many of the facts alleged against him and endeavouring to prove a case as to his motive which would require very considerable subtlety and might well be expected to fail. In the case of the others it is not clear to me whether any of the accused were members of the so-called Strike Committee; but if they were the plea might well be taken that the Admiral had himself promised that there would be no victimization if representatives came forward to present the grievances of the ratings and this might be put forward as a plea in bar. Otherwise there is nothing to indicate on what grounds the evidence tendered is likely to be assailed and

details of the background from which incidents and facts might be extracted and used with effect by a skilful defence counsel are not available. As the evidence stands and on the assumption that no plea in bar can succeed and that the evidence is not substantially assailed during the trial it appears to me that the cases are good and should result in conviction.

3. Two questions however arise:

(1) What is likely to be the effect of the inevitable publicity which will be accorded to the trial? and

(2) What is the object sought by placing these men on trial (with the resulting publicity) in the hope of obtaining a conviction in place of quietly getting rid of them by a procedure which, though it may not enable the Naval authorities to dismiss these offenders and secure a term of imprisonment for them, can be conducted without any publicity at all?

4. On the first point it is relevant to consider the background against which the trials will be held. Public opinion has already been exacerbated as a result of the INA trials and I think that it can be said that there is universal relief, on both civil and military sides of Government, that these trials, which caused more trouble and anxiety than was expected, are now over. In view of the very strongly expressed criticisms in the Legislature and the evident disapproval indicated by the Defence Consultative Committee it is certain that further proceedings against even ring-leaders of the mutiny will evoke a certain amount of public resentment. The conduct of the trials will, I think undoubtedly be seized upon as a ground for criticism of Government and for creating or maintaining feelings of discontent and resentment. It will be impossible to shut out questions of alleged racial discrimination which it is unlikely that the result of the trials in connection with the so-called RAF "strike" will do anything to allay. The publicity given to the deliberations of the Enquiry Commission appointed to investigate the causes of the RIN mutiny and the behaviour of the Indian Members of that Commission during the course of their enquiry are an indication of points which will be canvassed during the course of each of the trials and to which it is to be expected that extensive publicity will be given. It can be confidently expected that no influential element of public opinion will express satisfaction at the conduct of the trials and that what will be brought into public prominence during the hearing will offer ammunition for critics of Government and for those whose interest it is to foment misunderstanding and ill-feeling between Indian and British nationals. For instance if they are begun before the RIN Enquiry Commission submits its report there will be a demand for their postponement until that report has been considered. In present circumstances Home Department consider that nothing is gained by persisting in a policy which in their view must inevitably have these results. It might very well be different if a decision were postponed until the "Interim Government" is installed and if that Government decided to proceed with the trials: but it is quite likely that a decision to hold the trials taken now would be at once revoked when the new Government takes office.

5. On the second question I suggest that advantages will accrue from wide publicity and exemplary punishments only if there is at least a balance of public opinion which considers that this course is appropriate and when it can be confidently deduced that service opinion itself [itself] considers that the traditions of the service have been violated and its members have been let down by the accused. In the present case of Home Department gravely doubt whether either of these two conditions obtains. They are of opinion that sympathy, open or disguised, is very generally with the mutineers and that, whether explicitly or not, a balance of vocal public opinion will consider them in a way to be "bahadurs". The Home Department

thinks that press comment is bound to be such as will have a deleterious effect on service discipline and morale.

They recognise that a decision on the question what is necessary for the maintenance of discipline is for His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief of take. They are, however, vitally interested in the maintenance of standards of discipline in the armed forces if only because, in the last resort, it is upon the armed forces that Government must rely for the ultimate vindication of its authority.

The Home Department are of opinion that, in the present state of service discipline and general unsettlement, there is a grave danger that the result of the proposed trials will have an adverse effect upon discipline which will far outweigh any advantages expected to result from the sentencing and dismissal of the accused rather than their unobtrusive discharge after what corresponds to departmental proceedings.

(A.E. Porter).

3. Home Department Considers Court-martial of Commander King Inadvisable

Extracts from a copy of letter by A.E. Porter, Secretary, Home Department, Government of India, to G.E.B. Abell, Private Secretary, Viceroy, dated New Delhi, 7 June 1946.

File No. 21/8/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India [NAI].

New Delhi, 7th June 1946.

My dear Abell,

2. I omitted to refer specifically to one aspect of the case in my letter of yesterday, namely, the charge of using violence against an officer. This charge is laid and, subject to the observations made in paragraph 2 of my letter, would appear to be sustainable in the case of Meharban Shah, Hira Lal and Akbar Ali. The Home Department considers that in ordinary circumstances charges of this nature might well be on quite a different footing from the other charges arising from the mutiny, since the use of violence to a superior officer is universally recognised as being a very serious crime indeed in all disciplined forces. If it had been possible, therefore, to try these three men on this charge only the Home Department might have inclined to the view that there was no reason to stand in the way of a court martial. It is in their opinion clear, however, that no trial on this charge alone could possibly be held without attracting full publicity for all the other aspects of the mutiny which, if the argument made in my letter of yesterday is accepted, it is most desirable to avoid.

3. I have now read the records of three further proposed cases covering seven individuals, the charges against whom are summarised below.

(1) Commander King: he was in command of HMIS TALWAR and is charged with having committed acts prejudicial to good order and naval discipline by using insulting language to ratings and failing to investigate and settle their complaints arising therefrom.

(2) Y.D. Sharma: he is charged with taking a leading part in the mutiny on HMIS NARBADA.

(3) M.A. Khan: he is charged with taking a leading part in the mutiny on HMIS NARBADA.

(4) Y. Hussain Qazi: he is charged merely with joining a mutiny in which, however, he appears to have taken a prominent part.

(5) K. Nagaratnam: he is charged with taking part in a mutiny in HMIS DALHOUSIE of which he actually claimed to be a leader.

(6) A. Karīm: he is charged with taking part in the mutiny of HMIS DALHOUSIE in the course of which it appears that he pushed the Quarter-master off the wheel with the object of altering the ship's course.

(7) K. Singh: he is accused of taking part in a mutiny on HMIS DALHOUSIE in the course of which he was spokesman for the mutineers and offered to take over command of the ship when its surrender by the officers was demanded.

4. In general the comments made in paragraph 2 of my previous letter hold in these cases and, subject to the reservations there made, it appears to me that all of these cases should end in conviction.

5. The general conditions, however, set forth in the remainder of that letter also, in my view, hold. In addition, in respect of the case of Commander King, it appears to the Home Department that there would, in any case, be insufficient justification for treating his offence as one in the circumstances warranting the publicity of a set court martial trial. He is alleged to have called ratings "sons of bitches and coolies" and "junglies" and to have postponed for nearly a week investigation into the complaint made by fourteen ratings against this language. If the trial is held it will be impossible to prevent the ventilation of a very great deal of racial prejudice and if the object is to allay racial antagonism by showing that impartial justice is dispensed in disciplinary matters in the Royal Indian Navy irrespective of race this object will, I believe, be frustrated. In any case, when acts of mutiny of the gravest kind are being recommended by the Home Department for treatment through ordinary departmental proceedings, it would, in my view, be anomalous to treat Commander King in any other way.

6. I understand that there is one more case to be considered and I will address you again when I have received the papers relevant to it and considered on.

(A.E. Porter).

4. Wavell and Auchinleck for Proceeding without Delay with RIN Courts-martial

Telegram from the Secretary, War Department, Government of India, forwarding a message by C.J.E. Auchinleck, Commander in Chief in India, to John Colville and Francis Mudie, Governors, Bombay and Sind respectively; dated 30 June 1946.

File No. 21/8/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India [NAI].

Personal for Sir John Colville and Sir Francis Mudie from Field Marshal Auchinleck

Now proposed with approval of Viceroy to proceed with trial of RIN mutineers accused of mutiny with violence or of mutiny on the high seas. Ten ratings will be brought to trial at Bombay in three courts and two at Karachi in one court. In addition Commander King and Lieut. Sobhani will be court-martialled at Bombay.

Action to bring these persons to trial was suspended by Viceroy pending issue of negotiations for establishing popular interim government at Centre but it is now considered most undesirable to delay further. Proposed therefore to commence trials this week unless you have any serious objection.

5. Bombay Government Thinks Trials of Mutineers Inopportune

Extracts from a telegram by the Chief Secretary, Government of Bombay, to Private Secretary to the Viceroy; dated 1 July 1946.

File No. 21/8/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India [NAI].

... With regard to holding of public trials of RIN mutineers. I consider that holding of public trials at the ... [indecipherable] ... would be most inopportune when more moderate ... [indecipherable] ... are strained to maintain ascendancy over Congress Socialists who are at present bitterly critical of Vallabhbhai Patel and others for lack of support to RIN mutineers. Public trials will give Congress Socialists an opportunity to strengthen their influence and this may make future negotiations for Congress participation in Central Government more difficult. The situation is aggravated by fact that in next few weeks Congress Committee will be holding meetings in Bombay which will therefore be focus for all-India Congress activities. I strongly urge that if trials must be held at this juncture they should be in camera.

So far as local reactions are concerned some rioting might take place if trials were public but owing to wet weather this is not likely to be serious.

The other reaction however appear to me to be of much consequence. I am sending a copy of this telegram to the Viceroy.

6. Auchinleck for Summary Proceedings, Except in the Case of Commander King

Letter by A.D.F. Dundas, Secretary, War Department, Government of India, forwarding a message from C.J.E. Auchinleck, Commander in Chief in India, to G.E.B. Abell, Private Secretary, Viceroy; dated 3 July 1946.

File No. 21/8/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India [NAI].

For Abell from Field Marshal Auchinleck

I still consider we ought to proceed with the trials for two main reasons, firstly necessity from point of view of Naval Discipline in future years and secondly possible repercussion in Army where some soldiers have already been sentenced to terms up to three years imprisonment for similar offences connected with mutiny, but less serious in degree. Nevertheless in view of political arguments advanced by Governor of Bombay I am prepared to give up idea of Courts-Martial and proceed against remaining offenders summarily which means maximum of 90 days rigorous imprisonment and dismissal with disgrace. I must point out the general decrease in severity of punishment which is taking place. Although the Jubbulpore Signals offenders have been punished with terms up to three years, this is very much below the standard prevailing before and during the War. I cannot therefore regard myself as bound by this decision as a precedent and have only reluctantly reached it in view of very exceptional circumstances prevailing in India generally and in Bombay in particular at the present moment. Had an Interim Government come into being I should not have recommended abandoning these Courts-Martial but should have advised War Members to proceed with them in interests of future of Armed Forces.

2. Above relates to trial of ratings. It follows that Lieut. Sobhani should also not be brought to trial but should be dealt with under Reg. 95 RINVR by which an officer may after being

given opportunity to show cause to contrary be discharged *inter alia* for unsatisfactory conduct while serving in any of HMI ships or establishments.

3. Commander King I recommend should be court-martialled as arranged in the interests of the officer himself as well as of the Service. Charges will relate to using unbecoming language and failure to investigate a complaint when brought to his notice. Opinion is that trial will be of very short duration probably one morning, will not attract undue publicity and, if found guilty, sentence is unlikely [to] compare unfavourably with those of ratings and Lieut. Sobhani.

A.D.F. Dundas.

Secretary to the Government of India.

7. War Department Agrees with Auchinleck

Note by A.D.F. Dundas, Secretary, War Department, to A.E. Porter, Secretary, Home Department, Government of India; dated 5 July 1946.

File No. 21/8/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India [NAI].

War Department

In view of exceptional circumstances prevailing in India generally and in Bombay in particular, as expounded by HE the Governor of Bombay, H.E. the Commander-in-Chief has, with the approval of H.E. the Viceroy, made the following final decision with regard to the remaining persons implicated in the RIN Mutiny.

(1) The remaining ratings, 10 at Bombay and 2 at Karachi, will be tried summarily instead of by court-martial. This means a maximum punishment of 90 days rigorous imprisonment plus dismissal.

(2) Lieut. Sobhani will be dealt with under Regulation 95 of the RINVR, by which an officer may, after being given an opportunity to show cause to the contrary, be discharged for unsatisfactory conduct.

(3) Commander King will be court-martialled on charges relating to using unbecoming language and failure to investigate a complaint when brought to his notice. His trial will take place in Bombay and is expected to be of very short duration.

A.D.F. Dundas.

Secretary.

8. Commander King to Appeal Against Sentence

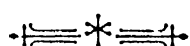
Jotting on file by A.D.F. Dundas, secretary, War Department, Government of India; dated 23 July 1946.

File No. 21/8/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India [NAI].

... Commander King is appealing against his sentence by RIN Court Martial.

A.D.F. Dundas,

23.7.46.



1.vi.g Aftermath: Newspaper Sources

1. RIN Ratings in Custody on Hunger Strike

Extracts from a news report, 'Over 300 RIN ratings on hunger strike in Mulund Camp.'

Free Press Journal, 14 March 1946.

Bombay, Wednesday. Since Tuesday morning the three hundred and ninety naval ratings who have been segregated in the Mulund Camp have been on hunger strike.

Early on Tuesday morning the ratings had their breakfast as usual. Later in the morning the messengers from each barracks went to the canteen to fetch the midday meal. When they reached there and were given the food to take away, the messenger from H block said that the amount of food that was given to him was too little and not enough for 50 men in his block....

When the messenger from H block approached the Officer in Charge, one Lt Singh from the Punjab, the latter took hold of him by the ear and dragged him four or five yards, ending by telling him to get out.

When the messenger returned to his block and told his comrades his story of what had happened, they all decided not to take any food unless the officer apologised and they were given more food. The rest of the camp immediately joined in the strike and the position as it was on Wednesday evening was that the 390 ratings in the camp had taken no food since Tuesday morning.

The authorities have been sending in the food but the ratings have one and all refused to touch it....

2. Mulund Camp (Bombay) Strike Spreads

Extracts from a news report, 'More military guards at Mulund Camp.'

Free Press Journal, 15 March 1946.

The latest reports from the Mulund Camp which in official parlance is out of bounds for all naval men show that the authorities are expecting further trouble.

The military guards have been doubled since last evening and the inmates of the Camp, who number nearly 400, have been divided into batches of eight and ordered not to communicate with one another.

It is learnt that the military guards have been ordered to prepare for all emergencies.

These stricter official measures it is reported, are a sequel to the refusal of the inmates of the Mulund Camp to attend an officially sponsored cinema show on Wednesday night.

Following the hunger strike at Mulund, HMIS Talwar and HMIS Cheeta went on partial "sit-down" strike this morning. The other ships and shore establishments were preparing to follow suit when they received news at 1130 hours that the strike had been called off and that the demands of the internees at the Mulund Camp had been conceded....

It is learnt that of the 300 ratings of HMIS Hamla who were involved in the demonstrations on the night of February 22, when they drove into the city from Marve with Lt Issac [Isaac] Sobani, the majority will be discharged from the RIN after summary punishment for indiscipline.

The question of putting up a small number, less than 25, for trial before a court-martial, it is believed is under consideration. But the ultimate decision is expected to be against court-martial to avoid the publicity that attaches to it.

Considerable interest is felt in the fate awaiting Lt Sobani....

3. Hunger Strike of Arrested Ratings

Report, 'RIN ratings' leaders on hunger strike.'

People's Age, 24 March 1946.

On Tuesday March 12, three hundred and eighty naval ratings who have been confined at the Mulund Camp (near Bombay) for their part in the naval 'mutiny', went on hunger-strike.

By their action the strikers have shown that though the Government won the first round, their spirit is unbroken, their courage and determination as high as before.

The strike began over the maltreatment of a rating by a naval officer. The rating who had gone to fetch food for his block in the camp protested to the officer in charge of the canteen that the food was too little for the fifty ratings among whom it was to be distributed. In answer the officer roundly abused him and kicked him out of his office.

Immediately afterwards the entire batch of ratings with the exception of twelve went on hunger-strike.

Their Demands

The next day the Flag Officer Commanding, Bombay, Rear-Admiral Rattray, accompanied by an Army Brigadier, visited the strikers and was told that the strike would only be called off if the following two demands were accepted.

1. The officer concerned should apologise to the men for his action in insulting and maltreating a rating.

2. The food must be improved so that the ratings inside the Camp gets as good and as much food as those outside the Camp.

The Flag-Officer said that he would consider the demands and let the strikers know his decision later.

After his departure, however, the situation quickly worsened. Two Indian Naval Lieutenants tried to break the strike by taking out the hunger-strikers in batches and tempting them with sweets and fruits. In this attempt, however, they completely failed.

Later in the evening the officers announced that they would hold a cinema show; the strikers refused to witness it, but when the authorities persisted and put up the screen, some of the strikers rushed at the screen and tore it down. Immediately Curfew was declared and all were confined to the barracks.

That night the twelve blacklegs who had refused to join the strike and thus earned the contempt of all their comrades, grew more and more nervous at the jeers and shouts which were continuously being directed at them. They pleaded with the authorities and were isolated in one special block, out of which they do not come out at all!

Next morning (Thursday), instead of any answer from Admiral Rattray about the strikers' demand, further steps were taken by the authorities to try to crush the strike.

Forty-three strikers, among them Leading Signalmen Khan, former leader of the Strike Committee, were arrested and kept in a separate block. On Friday morning they were taken

out of the Camp. Khan was taken to Colaba Military Barracks, while the others were taken to the Kalyan Military Jail.

British Soldiers Kick and Abuse

At Kalyan itself after the Military trucks carrying the arrested strikers had reached near the jail, the strikers were asked to run to the jail. Many of them, being too weak after three days of fasting, could barely walk, let alone run; but all who did not run, were kicked and abused by British soldiers who were acting as their escorts.

Meanwhile, inside the main barracks excitement rose high. The strikers at one time on Thursday morning attempted to rush the gate and rescue their arrested comrades but on seeing that the troops surrounding their Camp had been kept ready to open fire, they did not carry out this plan.

Soon after this, a Naval Captain went inside the main Camp to persuade the strikers to give up their hunger-strike. This attempt, however, failed, the officer's shoulder-straps were torn off and he was forced to flee.

The position as it was in on Friday night was that the hunger-strike was continuing in spite of many of the most militant strikers having been moved. The condition of twelve of the strikers was serious and they had to be removed to hospital where they were being forcibly given glucose and vitamin injections.

Deceiving the Public

The Naval Authorities at first did not give any information about the strike to the public. The publication of the news in the *Free Press Journal* on Thursday morning, however, forced them to issue a communique in the evening—were they admitted that a strike had taken place but also claimed that as many as 100 ratings were black-legs and that the strike ended on Thursday morning—two facts which are simply not true.

On Friday night, a further communique was issued that everything was back to normal, except for twenty men who were still refusing to eat. This also is not true; clearly enough the authorities were doing their best to deceive the public by giving out a completely false picture of the real situation.

4. Jubbulpore Indian Signals Corps' Strike

Extracts of a letter by a soldier of the Indian Signals Corps at Jabalpur, to his brother, were published in the *People's Age* under the heading, 'Indian army too wants national government.' The letter as it appears in the newspaper has been reproduced in full below, including the extract marks. The parenthesised comments preceding the letter are by the editor of the newspaper.

People's Age, 7 April 1946.

[We give below the story of the strike in the Indian Signals Corps at Jubbulpore, related in a letter from one of its participants to his brother. Many of the leading Jubbulpore strikers are still under arrest—and it is not known what action the authorities intend to take against them. The letter, however, clearly shows the need for immediate action to help them if they are not to suffer for their heroic struggle in a cause common to all Indians.—Editor, *People's Age*].

Dear Brother,

I and keeping all right. I have not written for so long because of our strike.... These days are a new experience in my life....

On the morning of 27th February, we came back to our unit at 8.30 a.m. after finishing our physical parade and drill, which had begun at 7 a.m. After our breakfast, we, about 300 in all, consisting of Andhras, Tamils, Malayalees, Kanarese, Punjabi Muslims and Dogra Sikhs, assembled together and passed the following resolutions:

(1) **ON FOOD:** At present the food supplied to Madrasis consists of one plate of food (rice) in the morning and four rotis in the evening. The rice supplied to us is full of stones and paddy. While this is our position, others are given rotis both times. We demanded that the rice and rotis supplied to us must be clean and good and the quantity also must be increased.

(2) **LODGING FACILITIES** should be given to us as given to British soldiers. Of course we have electric lights and tiled roofs for our lodges. Yet we have to sweep our places ourselves, cow-dung the floor once in a week, and also there is no proper protection from rain.

(3) Our **BASIC SALARY** must be increased. The wage of Rs 18, which an ordinary Indian sepoy gets should be increased. Some of my friends and I get more than Rs 70 per month. You will ask me how I get Rs 70. We get the Rs 70 because of various allowances we are given for our skilled work. But we demanded increase of wages not only for ourselves but for all our comrades in the Indian Army. For the same work which we do a British soldier gets Rs 200. Why is there this discrimination?

(4) The fourth resolution condemned the **FIRING** by British troops on the RIN and the haughty **ATTITUDE** of Admiral Godfrey.

(5) The fifth resolution condemned Commander-in-Chief Auchinleck's Speech on the All India Radio on the 25th and 26th February.

(6) The last resolution condemned the proposal of the Government of India to spend one crore of rupees for the **VICTORY DAY CELEBRATIONS** in these days of famine and asked why that amount should not be spent on famine relief.

These are our six demands. After this, at about 9.30 a.m. we started from our unit in a procession carrying the Congress Tricolour, the Muslim League, and Communists flags, to Jubbulpore, four miles away.

We had hardly gone a mile when our officers found out that we had marched away, and rushed in pursuit of us; they overtook us and threatened us with rifles and machine guns. When they did this, we naturally refused to turn back, and undaunted, we proceeded ahead.

We had not proceeded more than 20 yards further when they dashed a 15-cwt lorry against us. Two of my friends were hurt by this. One received a serious head injury and another was hurt on the hip. In spite of all this, we kept marching forward. Our officers threatened us with revolvers. But they miserably failed to drive us back.

We successfully reached the town and went to Tilak Maidan. There we contacted the local Congress, League and Communist leaders and asked for their help. They agreed. We had a public meeting.

The representatives of the three parties and some of us spoke in the meeting on the six demands which we had formulated in the morning in our unit.

After the meeting at about 3 p.m. we were given tea and at about 4.30 p.m. in the evening we started returning to our barracks. Our area Commander and some of the officers who came to know of the day's happenings put us under arrest and kept us in STC (1) Jail. They enquired from us our demands and assured us that they would give sympathetic attention to our demands.

Next morning (February 28), they asked some of us to come with them. But we refused. Then again, at 1.30 p.m. they came with British troops and entered the "Azad Hotel" in our barracks. They tried to isolate the wanted persons and tried to take them away forcibly. We resisted. They fired upon us, and resorted to bayonet charge, etc. Two of our comrades were killed in the scuffle. Twenty of us received serious injuries. In this struggle the fence around our units was broken and we rushed out and reached the town and contacted the same leaders whom we had met last time.

They gave the news to the District Commissioner and he sent a letter to our authorities, stating that if we were given the assurance that no action would be taken against us, we were ready to return to the barracks. That was assured to us.

But they broke their promise and took us away and kept us in detention in the 27/9 Jat Regiment Field Detention Barracks, 6 miles away, the same day, at 10 p.m. in the night.

We, 160 of us, were kept in detention in a place not more than 500 square yards in area. It reminded me of the Calcutta Black Hole. Sleeping, easing ourselves, cleaning our bowels—all had to be done in the same place! We spent the 28th February and 1st March there.

On the 2nd March, we were taken to a special detention camp. Local Congressmen came and showed us the letter which was sent by Maulana Azad to us asking us to resume work. We agreed to return to work on March 6, and came back to our barracks.

But I think, none of our demands will be conceded, nobody is moving about them.

But any how, what emerges from this is that the Indian Army too wants a National Government. Even now some persons are in detention. I hear that they are going to be court-martialled because they were found to be the ring leaders of the rising. We will fight on—but all must help us.

5. Unemployment Among Demobilised Soldiers

A letter to the editor by a demobilised soldier, who signed himself as 'A soldier returned from the war' was published in *People's Age* under the heading, 'What Must 20 Lacs Of Us Do To Live?' Selected extracts are reproduced below. The parenthesised comments preceding the letter are by the editor of the weekly.

People's Age, 14 April 1946.

(About 50 lac members of the Indian Army, Navy and Air Force are being demobilised. They used to get each, all told, about Rs 60 to Rs 70 per month and could never manage to send home to their families more than Rs 40 or Rs 50.

So their families have now no savings to fall back on after they are demobbed. And yet the demobbed soldier does not get anything more than 56 days' pay and food allowance, plus Rs 3.50 as a 'parting kick'. And they are being warned that their names will not be registered at the Labour Exchanges till these 56 days are over. To round off this picture of gloom—there has been an official announcement that not more than 30,000 of the demobbed men can be given jobs as things stand.

We print a letter received from one of our Indian soldiers who sent a letter to the Bengali daily of the Communist Party. *Swadhinata* published in Calcutta.—Editor *People's Age*).

My dear Editor,

... I am a war-retuned soldier. I know this description I give of myself will not draw out any sympathy from the leaders of our country. Men like me don't get the chance to read your paper regularly because it is not easily available in the market. But the few issues I have read have given me hope that you will listen to us and make know our plight to our countrymen.

I joined the army in February, 1943. I come from a middle-class family. I was alarmed at the fate staring my Bengal at the time. The price of rice and everything else was shooting up. Another brother of mine had already joined the army a year before me. His earnings made it possible for my family to carry on in 1942, but in 1943 it became impossible to maintain our middle-class standard of living. I was compelled to join the army to save my brothers and sisters and my parents from the clutches of famine. I saved them by joining the army and by getting rationed food for them.

The two of us did not earn enough to be able to save anything for the future. It was barely possible to keep the family from starving. Meanwhile, our sisters have grown up. We have to think of their marriage. We have not been able to give them a good education. We have no money to pay for the expenses of their weddings.

I have been demobilised for about three months. The little capital they gave us before cutting us adrift has almost been eaten up. I have legged around a lot—to the Labour Exchange and back. The authorities there hold out plenty of hopes—but nothing happens and the family can't live on hope.

I am not alone in my plight. There are lacs like me who face the same fate. Some of the leaders tell us 'revolt'. But against whom shall we revolt and how? Who will give us marching orders? When my mother, sisters and father have nobody left to turn to for help as a result of our revolt—who will look after them?

That is why I could not help writing to you about our tragedy—the tragedy of Indian soldiers now thrown on the scrapheap. We also want to ask you: have we no right to live? Must 20 lacs demobbed soldiers like me be wiped out in the new famine that is coming?

6. Jabalpur Army Strikers Face Court martial

Extracts from a news report, 'Echo of Jubbulpore army strike.'

Free Press Journal, 17 April 1946.

Jubbulpore, April 16. Three summary general courts-martial yesterday assembled in three different places to try Signalman Jagat Singh, Havildar-Clerk Gyan Singh and Company Havildar-Major Krishnan, of the Indian Signal Corps, Jubbulpore, who are charged under Section 27(A), and alternatively Section 27(B), of the Indian Army Act, for having excited a mutiny, or being present at a mutiny and not using their utmost endeavours to suppress it. All the three accused pleaded not guilty to both the charges.

These cases are sequel of the Indian Sepoys' strike at Jubbulpore on February 27, 28 and March 1....

7. Dismissed RIN Ratings Write to Vallabhbhai Patel

Extracts from a report, 'Victimised RIN ratings write to Sardar Patel.'

People's Age, 12 May 1946.

... A letter has been received by Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel from dismissed naval ratings calling his attention to the wholesale victimisation of the RIN strikers. Here is the text of the letter:

"Jai Hind:

We the undersigned dismissed RIN ratings at present putting up at Congress House most humbly beg to put before you the following statement.

Though the C-in-C had assured the Congress President, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, that there would not be any victimisation of the RIN ratings who had taken part in the strike, we have learnt to our surprise through believable sources that till now forty of the RIN ratings on strike have been sentenced and sent to jails. We have some of the names. (The letter gives twenty-two names).

It is also learnt from believable sources that some more ratings at present in Kalyan and Mulund Detention quarters are to be tried individually and punished. More information when collected will be forwarded to your honour.

Jai Hind."

I am also in a position to state that no immediate action is contemplated by Sardar Patel on this letter.

I was, indeed, shocked to find among certain people at the Birla House an attitude of utter indifference to the whole affair.

"Did these Navy fellows ask the Congress before striking?"—was one remark which I heard and which illustrates rather sharply the attitude of these particular people.

I enquired if at least some form of protest would be made against the dismissal and imprisonment of ratings. But I was not able to secure any categorical reply from anyone.

When I referred to the assurances given by Sardar Patel when he called on the ratings to give up the strike—assurances that he would see that no victimisation took place—I was asked to "wait a little and see ... the Congress will soon be in power."

8. Indian Soldiers Send a Memorandum to Cabinet Mission

Extracts from a report, 'Quit forthwith!'

People's Age, 9 June 1946.

"The brave Indian soldiers, sailors and airmen played a prominent part against the Axis domination of the world.... But when we return to our country, it is still under British domination. The very sight of hundreds of thousands of British troops in India irritates us ...," says a memorandum, dated May 2, sent by the patriotic youth of the Indian Army, Navy and Air Force, to the Cabinet Mission.

It is a hard-hitting, plainspeaking document copies of which were sent to the Nationalist Press but no one cared to let our people know what these patriotic sons in the forces were thinking and doing.

Repudiating the charge that Indians in the Armed Forces are 'mercenaries', 'rice-soldiers' or traitors, the memorandum says, "We are determined to prove by our vigilant action that we are not mercenaries but a patriotic army determined to fight with vigour and enthusiasm against the hated British Imperialists and liberate our country from foreign subjugation."

The memorandum opens with the following demands: "We the members of the three Services, namely, the Indian Army, the Royal Indian Navy and the Royal Indian Air Force, place before you this memorandum for your careful examination and call upon you to give full consideration on all points stated below:

1) A declaration of 'complete Independence' should be made forthwith and as a test of the sincerity of this declaration, 75% of the British troops must be immediately withdrawn, say within three months after this announcement.

2) Arrangements should be made forthwith for the complete evacuation of British troops from India which must be completed before the end of this year 1946.

3) The demobilisation of Indian soldiers must be temporarily suspended, until such time as the National Government takes up the question and determines the strength of the Indian Army to maintain internal peace, security, and defence of India when the British troops are completely withdrawn.

4) Indian Sterling balances frozen in Britain must be repaid in gold and by surrendering all British assets such as railways, factories, etc., to the newly-constituted National Government.

5) All previous treaties between the Princes of the Indian States and the British Government must be declared invalid, and their future status decided by the elected representatives of the people of the respective States and the National Government of India.

6) Immediate release of all INA soldiers, political prisoners and all those who were court-martialled during the February RIN strikes.

7) An Interim National Government must be formed at the Centre based on parity between the League and the Congress and adequate representation to the minority communities, to take up the transference of power from the British Government.

Referring to the Cabinet Mission's activities in India, the memorandum says that its sincerity is doubted, its strategy obvious and that its aim is to take advantage of Indian differences to impose the "hated Coupland-Cripps Plan ... which would mean military and economic domination of India for another century," and concludes, "There is only one way out of the impasse, i.e., you quit and we will solve our problems ourselves."

It demands immediate withdrawal of British armed forces because "with British troops still in India, the present negotiations are only a mockery," and says that if leaders of some parties agreed to allow British troops to continue in India for some time, the Indian armed forces will oppose it "with all the resources at our disposal."

The memorandum from Muslim servicemen expressing confidence in Mr Jinnah, says, "The memo does not mean that they [Muslim servicemen] will fight against their Hindu and Sikh brothers in the services.... They will be only too glad to fight the British first, the common enemy, and oppressor of all Hindus and Muslims alike."...

9. Eastern Command's Security Intelligence Summary Leaked to the Press

Extract from a featured column, 'A patriot's notebook.'

People's Age, 14 July 1946.

One of my correspondents has sent me a copy of Eastern Command's "Security Intelligence Summary" for May 1946. These monthly summaries are top secret documents meant only for very high and trusted officials. They put out the official military view of the month's events.

One of the most interesting sections in the Summary I have received is Part II on "Security".

Under the heading "Subversive Activities" comes the following: "Units are warned that the Oriental Café in Barrackpore was found in the past to be contacting British and Indian

troops and distributing the *People's Age*. The keeper of this cafe is a Communist and may still be in contact with troops."

And yet another piece: "In Panagar Bazar, an eating place frequented by IORs was found to be continually playing a gramophone record.... It was made by Lieutenant Dhillon of the INA and was very anti British in tone, exhorting its listeners to 'free India from bondage'," etc.!

How fearfully, terribly subversive! Indian troops reading a political paper like *People's Age*, listening to seditious talk about freeing India! Scandalous, absolutely scandalous....

10. 2000 Indian Airmen on Strike in Kohat, North-West Frontier Province

Report, 'Behind army's iron curtain.'

People's Age, 22 September 1946.

On May 17, RAF Station, Kohat (NWFP), witnessed the unprecedented scene of a complete strike by all Indian airmen of the station. Nearly 2000 men were involved.

Thanks to the "iron curtain" behind which White bosses of the Indian armed forces work the true story of the strike has not been published anywhere. The reasons for the strike and the action taken by the authorities were revealed for the first time in a letter from an Indian airman published recently in the Calcutta Communist daily *Swadhinata*.

There are two Indian Squadrons stationed in Kohat, the 2nd and the 7th.

The Indian airmen of the station have been suffering from various difficulties for a long time—hard work and little pay, lack of the common amenities of life, bad food, bad clothing and inadequate accommodation.

Indian Officer Insulted

The growing discontent of the Indian airmen came to a head when Squadron Leader Hassan, the popular Commanding Officer of 7th Squadron, was insulted by a British airman. S/Leader Hassan put him under arrest.

Wing Commander Mehr Singh, the Station Commander, was expected to try the case.

Only a little earlier, an Indian airman had been sentenced to 28 days confinement in cell for a similar offence.

W/Commander Mehr Singh left the station on the plea of duty and the Station Adjutant, a British Officer, tried the man, and, of course, the British airman was acquitted.

As soon as the news reached the Indian airmen, they went on strike. There was a total stoppage of work in the two squadrons. Mehr Singh rushed back to Kohat. He assured the strikers that he would personally look into the matter and requested them to go back to work.

The Indian airmen accepted the Indian Wing Commander's assurance and went back to work. Mehr Singh did look into the matter personally, but only to uphold the decision of his White subordinate officer.

Key-men Punished

What is more, the whole of the 7th Squadron was placed under arrest. Five noncommissioned officers were picked up as ringleaders. The usual farce of a court-martial was gone through. Flight Sergeant Bose, Sergeant Sen and Warrant Officer Kasturilal were sentenced to two

years' RI each and Flight Sergeant Bhaduri and Warrant Officer Das Gupta to 1½ years' RI each. The fate of Squadron Leader Hassan is not known.

The five Noncommissioned officers who have been punished are the key-men of the unit. They have seen six years' service in the 7th Squadron and are very popular with officers and men for their efficiency and good behaviour. Their punishment is resented by the entire staff of the 7th Squadron and by the other India airmen of the station.

There is an Indian Defence Member at the Centre and the officer and men of the 7th Squadron expect him to intervene personally in the matter and to take steps to eradicate this pernicious system of discrimination from the Indian armed force.

11. Jayaprakash Narayan Invited to Head RIN Strike Committee

Extracts from a letter by H.C. Bihari, member, Naval Central Strike Committee, to Jayaprakash Narayan; dated Burdwan, 7 October 1946.

File No. 120; Jayaprakash Narayan Papers (1946) [NMML].

... I am one of the fourteen members of the Naval Central Strike Committee which later on was converted into a body which led the grand Mutiny in the Royal Indian Navy. It is needless to stress the part played by us in bringing the freedom of the country so near. It was this Mutiny which brought the Cabinet Mission to this country and the British Government—the mighty Imperialist British Government—to kneel down to settle with the Indians (Indians in their terms). But what is our fate. We are about 1000 (one thousand) men who have been discharged from the services on account of taking party in the Mutiny.... However we don't lament for our actions rather we are proud for the same. Now we wish that you should organise us, I, on behalf of the Mutineers of the Royal Indian Navy assure you we will be ever ready to abide by your calls. We will not be less gallant soldiers for fighting [for] the real independence of the country. You organise us we will rally under your banner. I don't know how Mrs Aruna Asaf Ali has forgotten us....

Jai Hind.

12. Communists Unhappy with Suppression of Findings of RIN Enquiry Commission

Editorial, 'Justice for RIN heroes.'

People's Age, 27 October 1946.

Eight months ago, sons of India serving in the Royal Indian Navy. By their historic naval uprising wrote a glorious chapter in the history of our people's fight for freedom.

The diehard British naval officers, backed by their imperialist masters in Delhi, and the entire power of their puppet press, tried to put across the slander that the uprising was the work of a few 'agitators' and 'mischief makers'. According to them the administration of the navy was totally blameless, conditions were ideal, racial discrimination a myth.

But the countrywide protest demonstrations in support of the just demands of the RIN men forced even Wavell's imperialist Executive Council to appoint an Enquiry Commission to investigate conditions inside the RIN and the cause of the uprising.

The Commission, after a detailed enquiry, has submitted its report, proving to the hilt that the uprising sprang out of the determined refusal of the young Indian naval rating[s] to tolerate any more the conditions of life and work and the humiliating discrimination imposed by an outmoded imperialist naval administration.

Thus the claim that the uprising was an integral part of the postwar awakening of our people and our freedom movement stand vindicated.

The report has been submitted to the Interim Government in which are present the leaders of our major popular parties—and we would expect them eagerly to welcome it and publish it for all to read.

Yes it is reported that the interim Government is going to allow the White Admirals and Generals, who still lord it in New Delhi, to suppress the report and instead issue a pale summary of it which will virtually exonerate them, the truly guilty men.

If this happens, a great injustice will have been done to the heroes of the naval uprising.

And worse still, by doing this, instead of strengthening in the Indian navy the proud spirit of freedom that inspired the uprising, the Interim Government will only stiffen the conceit and arrogance which characterises the imperialist administration which still rules the RIN.

All freedom loving Indians must demand the publication of the full report so that it is clear to our country and all the world how justified was the action of our brothers in the navy.

And more, they must demand also that the British officers responsible for the inhuman conditions, the brutal treatment and the widespread racial discrimination, be brought to book, thrown out of the service and severely punished according to their deserts.

Insolent foreigners have no place of India's navy. They must go.

This way India can pay back her debt to her great sons, and pave the way for the establishment of a real Indian People's Navy, inspired by the same freedom ideals as these lads.

1.vii NATURE OF POLITICAL UNREST (NOV. 45–FEB. 46)

1. Causes of Political Unrest in Bengal (Nov. 45–Feb. 46)

Extracts from a letter by the Secretary, Home Department, Government of Bengal, to the Secretary, Home Department, Government of India; dated Calcutta, 29 March 1946.

File No. 5/8/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India [NAI].

Calcutta, 29th March, 1946.

Sir,

... I am directed to forward a copy of a report from the Deputy Inspector General of Police, Intelligence Branch on the recent disturbances in Calcutta and suburbs. This report explains the role played by the political parties and how the different factors combined to produce the outbreaks. It is clear that the disturbances are chiefly attributable to strong anti-Government feelings created by the propaganda in praise of the Indian National Army and the Congress rebellion of 1942 and though they owe their initial momentum to the support of the Congress in one case and of the Muslim League in the other, it is doubtful if they would have assumed the proportions they did but for the deliberate exploitation of the situation by the Communists and a few small terrorist groups. The indications are that these groups have not changed their attitude.

The Provincial Government have considered carefully the question of taking suitable action against such activities as a preventive measure and have come to the conclusion that it will not be desirable to use the special laws such as the Indian Criminal Law Amendment Act, Ordinance III of 1944, etc., against the Communist and similar other parties at this stage as such action would lead to an agitation in which all parties would join and may defeat its object in the end. Moreover, as it appears that the Communist party has lost a good deal of its hold on the reappearance of the Congress on the political scene and as the internal situation has considerably improved in the meantime, application of the special laws seems hardly necessary and will be difficult to justify. For these reasons the Provincial Government have decided to rely on the ordinary law at present to deal with open incitement to disorder and violence....

J.N. Talukdar.
Additional Secretary,
Government of Bengal.

Enclosure

The Calcutta disturbances of November '45 and February '46 were the result of the INA trials in Delhi and the widespread campaign of sedition and abuse of the Government which has been going on for several months without any response from Government's side.

In November '45 the Students' organisations, Bengal Provincial Students' Congress and the Bengal Provincial Students' Federation, combined to stage a demonstration against the resumption of the trial of Shah Newaz, Seghal and Dhillon. The first of these Students' organisations is mainly controlled by the Jugantar party which has announced its intention of becoming merged in the Congress and the second organisation is controlled by the Revolutionary Socialist Party of India, the Forward Block and the Communist League of Soumyendra Tagore, otherwise known as the Revolutionary Communist Party of India.

When the demonstration was in danger of becoming a fiasco due to police preventing a procession being taken to Dalhousie Square, which was a prohibited area, an appeal was made to different Congress leaders and the Hindu mahasabha also began to take an interest in it. In spite of the fact that Sarat Bose disapproved of the demonstration, which he declared was promoted by 'agents provocateur[s]', other Congress and Mahasabha leaders supported the student demonstrators in their determination to flout the authority of the Government by taking a procession to Dalhousie Square and a large number of the general public, whose feelings had for some time been excited by the unrestrained speeches of Congress leaders and a seditious press campaign, collected to give their support to the demonstrators and witness developments. Finally the students demonstrators and the crowd succeeded in forcing a way past the police and marching in triumph round Dalhousie Square. Sarat Bose and Shyama Prasad Mukharji each claimed that at his instance permission had been obtained for the procession on the second day and this has not been denied by Government though it is understood that no such permission was given.

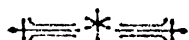
The demonstration was therefore started by the students and supported by the Congress. On the second day, however, when the trouble had grown to considerable proportions the Communist Party of India took an active part in the hope of regaining the popularity which it had lost as a result of the Congress condemnation of the party. The contribution of the CPI to the demonstration was the stoppage of transport in the city by bringing the workers of the Tramway Co, the Bus Cos, Taxi drivers and rickshaw-pullers out on strike.

When the students and a large mass of the public had achieved their 'victory' by marching in procession round Dalhousie Square the congress and the majority of students would probably have considered the demonstration at an end but a section of the students represented by the extremist groups controlling the BPSF [Bengal Provincial Students' Federation] and the CPI were reluctant to stop, especially as the demonstration was developing into the type of 'mass action' which the Communists have always looked forward to as the preliminary to 'revolution' and even if it was not to be revolution this time it was all good practice for future occasions. The withdrawal of Congress support and the threat by the Governor of calling out the military had the effect of stopping the rioting immediately.

In the February '46 disturbances the cause was again the INA trials but this time the Muslim League was offended because a Muslim member of the INA who had declared that he had only joined that organisation to protect member of his own community in the event of an invasion of India and prevent the establishment of Ram Raj by Subhas Bose and who had been defended by Muslim League lawyers, was sentenced to 7 years' RI [Rigorous Imprisonment] through the first three INA men, who had been defended by Congress lawyers, had been released.

These demonstrations commenced in a small way by Muslim students combining with a students' organisation controlled by the CPI to lead a procession round the prohibited area, Dalhousie Square. When these students were dispersed, Mr Suhrawardy and the Muslim League supported the demonstration, hooliganism commenced and after permission had been given and a huge procession had been taken round Dalhousie Square the disturbances became more violent and the military had to be called out to support the police. This action had the desired effect by the fourth day but the disturbances were more violent than they had been in November '45, more damage was done both to military and private cars, damage was done to shops in the European quarter of the city and there were attacks on individual Europeans and Anglo-Indians. As in the November disturbances the CPI brought public transport in Calcutta to a standstill and extended their operations to the stoppage of trains on the East Indian Railway, and the Bengal Assam Railway. A mob of mill workers was also incited to burn railway carriages.

The conclusions which I draw from the two outbreaks are (1) the method of dealing with the INA trials was the immediate cause in each case, (2) the demonstrations would probably not have been so serious but for the fact that the first one was supported by the Congress or persons speaking in its name and the second one was supported by the Muslim League, (3) the Communist Party of India and the Communist League exploited the situations with the object of developing a 'mass action' technique until the raffraff got out of hand and (4) other revolutionary organisations of Bengal notably the RSPI [Revolutionary Socialist Party of India] and the Forward Block took an active part in the demonstrations in the early stages.



2. Causes of Political Unrest in the Central Provinces and Berar (Nov. 45–Feb. 46)

Extracts from letter by A.H. Layard, Secretary, Political and Military Department, Government of the Central Provinces and Berar, to A.E. Porter, Secretary, Home Department, Government of India; dated Nagpur, 7 March 1946.

File No. 5/8/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India [NAI].

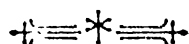
Nagpur, 7th March 1946.

My dear Porter,

... The Provincial Government is asked for its comments and to state that in references to the disturbances in Bombay and elsewhere the more prominent local newspapers have done what they can to discourage the acts of indiscipline which have recently taken place at Jubbulpore, although amongst the more extreme journals there is an undercurrent of sympathy with the mutinous elements in the RIN, Mr Ruikar who is Acting President of the Forward Bloc addressed a meeting at Nagpur on the 23rd February in which he supported the mutiny in the RIN and gave a warning of grave consequences if grievances were not redressed. A hartal was observed in Nagpur city on the 25th, and at another meeting Mr Ruikar and others, including a member of the Students Congress, Mr Titke, and Mr V.S. Dandekar, a member of the Hindustan Red Army, spoke in support of the RIN mutineers. On the 26th students in Wardha also held a meeting of sympathy and Congress students speakers spoke in support of the action taken by the mutineers, while on the 22nd February the PWD (Public Works' Department) workers Union in Wardha passed a resolution of sympathy. The unrest in the Postal and Telegraph Department and amongst railway employees has not received much notice except amongst those connected with the Departments themselves. The question of food scarcity has, however, been taken up by the local Congress and utilised by the more extreme section as a means of embarrassing Government. Some speakers have threatened revolt and looting if the situation gets any worse. This type of speech which has been used for electioneering purposes has been common throughout the province during the last week. It would appear that there has certainly been some organised attempt to tamper with the loyalty of the armed forces; but definite information as to whether the strike of the Signal Corps men at Jubbulpore was instigated from outside is not yet available, although it would appear that some local politicians could not have been unaware of what was happening, since arrangements to feed the men when they went into the city were made even on the first day on which this occurred....

It may be necessary to take steps if the situation deteriorates against Forward Bloc and communist leaders who may have acted with the open or tacit concurrence of the Congress High Command. Mr Ruikar who made a series of most objectionable speeches in Nagpur is the Acting President of the Forward Bloc. His speeches were possibly designed for electioneering purposes as he is a candidate for election to the Legislative Assembly. His activities however are for the moment suspended as he has gone to Bombay to undergo an operation for cataract, but action against him may become necessary should he continue after his return to make objectionable speeches inciting to violence.

(A.H. Layard)



3. Summary of Cause of Political Unrest, Province by Province (Nov. 45–Feb. 46).

Extracts from notes by F.G. Cracknell, Director, Intelligence Bureau, Home Department, Government of India, and J.A. Thorne, Home Member; dated 1 and 3 April 1946 respectively.

File No. 5/8/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India [NAI].

... Replies from Provincial Governments are now complete. A summary of replies has been prepared.... The general conclusions are as follows:

(i) There is no evidence of deliberate organisation of the disturbances. Different Parties have started the trouble in different places. In Calcutta, for instance, it was Congress demonstrations on one occasion and Muslim League demonstrations on another which caused the trouble. Trouble in Bombay was started by the Congress Socialist Party and in Sind the Congress are said to have been in sympathy with what happened.

(ii) The real cause of all these disturbances is not organisation by any particular Party but the general atmosphere induced by the inflammatory speeches and writings of Congress leaders particularly their support of the INA and all mutinous activities.

(iii) In every single instance the trouble once started was exploited by the Communists.

2. As regards suggestions for prevention and remedy of similar trouble in future, the following action I recommended:

1) *Rounding up of local trouble makers* In Sind the proposal is to arrest Communist leaders under Section 151, CrPC, and control their meetings. In Madras action is being taken under the Children's Act against waifs and strays as urchins were found to take a prominent part in the disturbances.

2) *Control of undesirable publicity* The Madras Government are taking up with the Press Advisory Committee the possibility of devising methods to induce the Press to give balanced accounts of disturbances. The Bengal Government are taking action in several cases against inflammatory matter circulated through newspapers or leaflets.

3) *Strengthening and re-equipping the police and paying attention to their conditions of service and morale generally*

4) No Province is in favour of *action by way of ban under the Criminal Law Amendment Act* The Bengal Government specifically refer to it as an undesirable course likely to create sympathy with the victims and defeat its own ends. The Punjab Government also point out that Congress is the real danger and action against minor Parties so long as Congress is left free to pursue its plans would be misconceived.

5) The Punjab Government suggest that the number of British troops in the country should be increased.

3. The general effect thus is that no action is at present advisable outside the steps we had already recommended.... The disturbances are the natural outcome of the policy of restraint recommended therein, but that policy was necessitated by the political negotiations and cannot be expected to survive them. When negotiations are completed, there will either be no further hostility to the Government or it will have to be dealt with in the usual way. Until that time

there is nothing to be done except to follow the policy and make the preparations already recommended.

(F.G. Cracknell).
1.4.46.

We may leave it there. In a number of Provinces the poachers are becoming gamekeepers; and it may be embarrassing for further correspondence to be received there just now. Certainly the present Punjab Ministry might be somewhat perturbed to read that Government's letter of March 2nd!

On the whole the replies are fairly reassuring; and I think our enquiry may have done good.

J.A. T(horne),
Home Member, 3.4.46.

1.viii DELHI VICTORY DAY CELEBRATIONS

1. Responses of Political Groups to Victory Day Celebrations in Delhi

Note prepared by Deputy Superintendent of Police, CID, Delhi; dated 7 March 1946.
File No. 6/13/46; Special Branch, Chief Commissioner's Office, Delhi (1946);
Department of Delhi Archives.

Programme of Events for 7th March, 1946

Congress

1. Will boycott the Victory Celebrations.
2. Will not make any demonstration.

Students' Congress

1. Will adhere to the Congress programme.

Student's Federation

1. Will sell black badges and black flags.
2. Will persuade students of various schools to participate.
3. Will move about in the City urging citizens to observe Hartal.

Leftist Groups

1. Will hold a public meeting in Queen's Garden at 3 p.m., in which destitutes and volunteers will tie bricks to their bellies and move about in the City shouting slogans of "Hai Bhook-Hai Bhook" and finally visit Faiz Bazar at the time of Military March-Past.

Community Party

1. Labour meeting at Roshan Ara Garden at 8 a.m.
2. Meeting at 11.15 a.m. in Urdu Park.
3. Will persuade Mill Owners, Tramway Employees to observe strikes.

4. A squad of Students on cycles will move about in the City urging the Citizens to observe Hartal.

5. Organize strike at Birla, Jama and Delhi Cloth Mills.

6. Will take out a procession from Roshan Ara Garden and proceeding via Bara Hindu Rao, Bara Tooli [Tooti], Lohari [Lahori] Gate, Clock Tower, will reach Juma Mosque.

7. Will persuade employees of Tramway Co and Municipality to join demonstrations and observe a hartal.

8. Miss Sarla Gupta, a communist, will take out a procession from Kashmere Gate. It will be composed of women in Black Burkas and Black Sarees, and will be taken to Urdu Park.

9. Conductors of GNIT Co will be persuaded to stop their Bus service.

Muslim League

1. Will boycott the Victory Celebrations and

2. Will not make any demonstration.

Jagan Nath,
Deputy Supdt. of Police, CID, Delhi.
7th March, 1946.

2. Disturbances in Delhi on Victory Day

Extracts from a note by W. Christie, Chief Commissioner, Delhi; dated 8 March 1946. File No. 6/13/46; Special Branch, Chief Commissioner's Office, Delhi (1946); Department of Delhi Archives.

Brief Note on the Disturbances in Delhi on March 7th 1946 Arising Out of the Victory Parade

The first overt act leading up to trouble was apparently the picketing, at Communist's instigation, of the Tramway Depots quite early in the morning of the 7th. Several of the leading picketters were arrested.

The trouble began developing early in the Chandni Chowk, and between 10 a.m. and 11 a.m. gangs of goondas and rowdies had begun damaging the illuminations and other property. The Senior Superintendent of Police and the District Magistrate proceeded to the Kotwali which remained their HQ for the rest of the day. Two of the earliest attempts at appreciable damage were apparently an attempt to set fire to the Town Hall which was frustrated after only a little damage had been done and the attack on an octroi post near the railway station coupled with an attack on a booking office in the station. The octroi post was set on fire. The District Magistrate, as a result of the trouble in the station area, rightly ordered the ladies in the Wavell Canteen to be evacuated under escort immediately.

As a result of this first disturbance the military authorities changed the route of the mechanised column for the Parade for both going to the Parade and on returning from it and sent it via the Bela Road instead of via Kashmeri Gate, Elgin Road and Faiz Bazar. This necessitated the police dispositions being similarly changed and the police force, which was appreciable for protecting the route from Kashmeri Gate to Faiz Bazar and with which it was also hoped to confine any trouble that did arise to the area west of that road, being moved to the Bela Road. This enabled the rowdy element to operate on the more open area east of the city, and apparently they were not slow to seize the opportunity and pulled down a number of

the bricks around the trees along the main road Elgin Road to Faiz Bazar and scattered them about the road, thus materially slowing down any traffic on the road and giving the mob handy missiles with which to attack traffic and people.

During the course of the afternoon a second attempt was made, this time successfully, to set fire to the Town Hall. The Fire Brigades were also largely demobilised by the mob also setting fire to the Queens Road Fire Station which, along with its fire engines, was burnt out. A third appreciable bit of incendiarism was the burning of the new Railway Clearing Accounts Office near Kishanganj Station. It is most significant that the Town Hall and the then Railway Clearing Accounts Office were also the main targets for incendiarism in the 1942 disturbances.

As a result of the disturbances before noon a decision had to be taken to take the contingent of the Delhi Police, which should have taken part in the Parade, out of the Parade as they were required to deal with the disturbances and additional military reinforcements had also to be brought into the Fort.

The District Magistrate in the course of the afternoon issued an order under Section 144 prohibiting the collection of more than 10 people. He also imposed a curfew order for the night and made it known that any people found deliberately destroying the property will be liable to be shot.

The police had to open fire on several occasions, but as far as I am aware in none of them was the firing extensive, and in most cases no more than one or two shots were fired. Tear gas was used on numerous occasions chiefly in the Chandni Chowk, to begin with very good effect, though the effectiveness of it wore off as the crowd realised the limitations of the damage done to them by it.

It is understood that the military had to open fire on at least one occasion when military police were attacked on the main road between Faiz Bazar and the Fort. A number of military vehicles were caught by the crowd and burnt including the motor bicycle of one military policeman. A police lorry and one of the GNIT buses were also burnt.

The demonstrations, arson and rioting were almost entirely the work of goondas and the rowdy element, incited to it by Communists and the Congress Left Wing, both of whom had, prior to the 7th March, done all they could to incite people to demonstrate actively on the 7th March against the Victory Week celebrations and the Victory Parade. The same can be said about the Left Wing Muslim Leaguers....

About 7.45 a.m. on the 8th Mr Asaf Ali telephoned to me saying that he and several leaders of the Muslim League and others were together and were anxious to try to get the city restored to normal conditions at once. Actually I had seen his appeal in the press and said I appreciated it. Mr Asaf Ali stated that he had heard a rumour that about 200 warrants of arrest have been issued and he suggested that, if such a large number of people are arrested, it might cause excitement and so detract from attempts to allay excitement. I explained to him that I thought it would be very necessary to arrest the real goondas who had been taken a leading part in the trouble, and that it was some times difficult to differentiate between a goonda and a member of a political party, as sometimes political parties claim goondas as their members and usually goondas claim to be members of one or other of the leading political parties. Mr Asaf Ali admitted that that was so, and while realising the necessity for arresting real goondas he asked if we could, wherever possible, hold our hands for a day or so in arresting those who were not really goondas but known leaders of political parties. I passed on the suggestion by telephone at once to the District Magistrate who by then had arrived at the Kotwali. He explained that there were probably 10 or 15 who would have to be arrested to-day as they were definitely

known to have taken a leading part in the disturbances and destruction on the 7th, but that otherwise he agreed that arrests which might be the cause of excitement would, whenever possible, not be made today.

W. Christie.
8th March 1946.
11.30 a.m.

3. M. Asaf Ali Condemns Victory Day Clashes

Extracts from a news report, 'Mr Asaf Ali's appeal.'

Statesman, 8 March 1946.

"It is too early to receive or comment on the regrettable happenings of today (Thursday) in Delhi, but I must take the earliest opportunity to appeal to the people of Delhi to see to it that no hartal is observed tomorrow and normal and peaceful life is resumed," says Mr Asaf Ali in a statement.

"What has happened today is proof enough of the fact that certain elements in our political life have learnt nothing from the unfortunate happenings of the recent past in other parts of the country.

"The destruction of property, acts of arson and assaults on people are subversive of the entire teaching of the Congress. Everyone must remember what the President of the Congress said only three days ago. He appealed to all parties to abstain from strikes, hartals, demonstrations and processions, to avoid strife of all kind and to maintain a peaceful atmosphere. I repeat and emphasize it, and trust that the people of Delhi will abide by the Congress President's instruction."—API.

4. Crowds Jeer Victory Parade

News report, 'New Delhi also protests.'

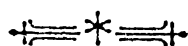
Hindustan Times, 8 March 1946.

New Delhi took the Victory celebrations more quietly than the old city, though not without protest. Despite official orders to shopkeepers to keep their shops open until midnight, all the business centres observed a complete hartal. A few shops opened in the morning, but most of them closed down by noon.

About 200 workers and students carrying black flags and placards saying "We boycott the Victory celebrations" demonstrated shouting anti-British slogans in Connaught Place a few minutes before the parade reached this area.

For the full one hour and 45 minutes that the parade took to pass through Connaught Place, the crowd on both sides of the row [road] of many places jeered at the marching soldiers and shouted anti-imperialist slogans.

Near the Odeon corner jeering was loud and continuous. Most of the men participating in the parade looked terribly depressed. The demonstrators were peaceful throughout.



5. Delhi a Bomb-shattered Sight After Victory Day Demonstrations

Extracts from a news report, 'Repeated shootings and tear gas attacks.'

Hindustan Times, 8 March 1946.

Delhi presented the sight of a bomb-shattered city after Thursday's happenings—mass demonstrations against Victory celebrations, destruction of public property worth about Rs 10 lakhs through large-scale incendiarism, continuous use of tear-gas and repeated firings by the police and the military in the Chandni Chowk and Ballimaran and in front of the Red Fort.

Although the exact number of casualties is not ascertainable, semi-official sources state that at least five persons were killed and about 20 injured as the result of tear gas attacks and firings. Thirteen people, most of them with bullet wounds, were admitted to the Irwin Hospital. The condition of two of them is reported to be serious. Their names are: Mohammad Rafiq, Ram Kishore, Sikandar Ali, Jabba, Yad Ram, Jalal Khan, Mohammad Zakir, Mohammad Irshad, Abdul Rashid, Munawwar Ali, Gopi Chand and Dr Salim.

Town Hall Set on Fire

These were the highlights of Thursday's disturbances; Mobs set fire to the Delhi Town Hall where the offices of the Delhi Municipality are housed and which was the object of mob fury in August, 1942, also.

Mobs also attempted to set fire to the building which houses the Reserve Bank and the Imperial Bank. The police opened fire here resulting in injury to about six persons. The statue of Queen Victoria was disfigured. Mobs also set fire to the electric sub-station in the Queen's Garden resulting in the failure of electricity in a large part of the city area. They also set fire to the Railway Clearing Accounts Office near the Kishanganj Railway Station. The terminal tax and grain-rationing posts in front of the Delhi Railway Station were burnt as well as four military lorries and a police van near the Clock Tower.

Two Muslim Boys Killed

About 20 men of the British Military Police were attacked by a huge crowd which threw stones at them. While retreating towards the Fort, they fired on the crowd killing two Muslim boys on the spot. The bodies were taken in a procession throughout the city.

Three others are reported to have been killed as a result of firing in different parts of the city. The whole city was thrown into darkness as a result of a large number of electric lamps being smashed.

At dusk huge columns of smoke were rising from several places in Chandni Chowk, including the Town Hall. The fire brigades were prevented from reaching the scenes of incendiarism by angry mobs who threw stones at the firemen. The roads were littered with bricks, stones, uprooted electric and telegraph poles and rubbish emptied from the dustbins in the streets.

The day began with a complete hartal, shops, cinemas, educational institutions and mills being closed and Tramway workers on strike. A large meeting was held in Gandhi Grounds and from there a number of hunger-marchers started in procession and passed through Chandni Chowk. Stones tied round their stomach[s] were intended to emphasize slogans which said, "We have stones instead of food—and you are celebrating Victory."...

The mobs followed the same tactics which they did in August 1942 and after sunset the city presented almost the same appearance as it did on August 11, 1942. Till late at night the Delhi Town Hall was in Flames....

The police arrested 11 workers of the Tramway Union earlier in the morning in connection with the hartal of the Tramway workers. The Tramway workers in their meeting held immediately after the arrest of their leaders decided to continue the strike until their leaders were released....

6. Government Asked to Explain Firing on Victory Day

J.A. Thorne, Home Member, answers questions during Legislative Assembly Adjournment motion on 8 March 1946.

File No. 5/2/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India [NAI].

The Honourable Sir John Thorne: Sir, I shall not spend much time in attempting to describe the incidents which made up the regrettable occurrences of yesterday. They have been described in the press and, I think, on the whole, that description is fairly accurate. I have done what I could to obtain from official sources a story of the events, but, as I stated my expectations this morning, it is too early to get yet a conspectus of a series of events that took place over a fairly considerable area. The main scene of the trouble was the Chandni Chowk. Various parts of the Chandni Chowk were affected at various times. There was trouble also at the Railway Station where an attempt was made at looting. There was a serious occurrence at the Queensway Fire Brigade Station which resulted in the destruction of fire engines which could otherwise have been used to put down the fires. There was trouble as far as Sabzi Mandi. There is some evidence of concerted organisation. The main evidence of that, I think, is in the starting of fires in the Chandni Chowk, the laying of road blocks to prevent people getting to the fires in order to put them out and the attack on the Fire Brigade Station in order to prevent the engines from pointing out....

Now, Sir, I should remark at this stage on the use of troops. Actually, two companies of troops were called out at different times. One company stayed at the Railway Station and the other company patrolled the Chandni Chowk. I have no doubt of the salutary effect of their being on the spot, but they took no active part.

Maulana Zafar Ali Khan: Were the British troops also called?

The Honourable Sir John Thorne: One company was British and the other was Indian....

Now, Sir, I turn to the firing incidents. Firing was done by the police on three occasions. The first occasion was that one round was fired by a sub-inspector, I think actually under the orders of a magistrate, with a revolver. There was no casualty. Later in the day, a senior police officer who was attempting in the Chandni Chowk to prevent people surging up the *gullies* on either side from making road blocks and from keeping on with their work of arson, fired two shots.

An Honourable Member: Were they under the orders of a magistrate?

The Honourable Sir John Thorne: The district magistrate was with this officer when it happened.

An Honourable Member: But did he order the firing?

The Honourable Sir John Thorne: Undoubtedly he ordered in a way. They were together. If the order was not explicit, it was implicit. Two shots were fired and one person was injured.

Then, later when a determined attempt was made on the Reserve Bank, an attempt to set fire to the Reserve Bank, the same police officer, I think, fired six rounds and four people were injured. So, that was all the firing by the police. There was no firing by any police officer except the two that I have named, one sub-inspector who fired one shot with his revolver, the other a senior officer who on two occasions fired seven rounds....

Now, Sir, what are the causes of this occurrence? Well, Sir, a great deal has been said about the strong indignation caused by the refusal of the Delhi authorities to refrain from taking part in the celebration of the Victory parade. I do not myself think that there is very much in that. I am afraid, if we look to other causes of this occurrence, we have to look back to six months. I think the seeds have been sown during the last six months. On all those occasions, whether it is in Delhi, whether it is in Karachi or Bombay or elsewhere, whatever the immediate occasion is, the real cause of these disturbances is a state of turbulence which has been engendered by months of incitement to disorder and to contempt of authority.

Prof. N.G. Ranga: Why don't you quit India?

The Honourable Sir John Thorne: My Honourable friend asks, "Why don't you quit India?" Because, nobody will take our place. That does not mean that Government are supine or that Government have abdicated their duties, ... Government, and by that I mean the Central Government and the Provincial Governments, have, in an agreed policy, deliberately and of set purpose observed in these past months a policy of patience and restraint. The reasons for that are first in order to ensure that elections should be held with the greatest possible freedom of expression and second in order to refrain from anything that would prejudice the permanent settlement of Indian difficulties which we are looking forward to. In that permanent settlement of India's difficulties, we who are responsible for public order believe that we have the greatest assurance that public order will be maintained and preserved and handed on from our generation to the next....

7. Incidents During Delhi Victory Day Parade

Extracts from report by Captain Wyllie Carrick, Officer in Charge, Regimental Colour Parties, to War Department, Government of India; dated Red Fort, Delhi, 9 March 1946.

File No. 6/13/46; Special Branch, Chief Commissioner's Office, Delhi (1946); Department of Delhi Archives.

*No. 3 Transit Camp,
Red Fort, Delhi, 9.3.46.*

Sir,

... In Connaught Place ... the shouting was so loud as to deaden the band and our own step.

Such cries as "Throw down our Colours", "You people are 'be-iman' whilst serving in the army", "Jai Hind" and "Inquilab Hindabad" were heard in Connaught Place.

No hostile actions were noticed while actually on the line of march other than the odd hand being raised.

... Whilst returning from depositing the Colours in the Red Fort the hostile crowd which had just been fired upon by the police on seeing the colour parties crossing the maidan (in threes) advanced upon us shouting "Put down your rifles and fight us empty handed" and other such cries inciting the Colour Parties to drop their weapons. They advanced to within

about 30 yards waving lathis and bricks. Upon our halting and charging magazines they came no closer and eventually thinned out considerably and gave us no further trouble....

Wyllie Carrick
Capt, 2nd Gurkhas,
O.C. Regtl Colour Parties.

8. Disturbances in Delhi during Victory Day Celebrations

Note prepared by Intelligence Bureau, Home Department, Government of India; dated 13 March 1946.

File No. 5/2/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India [NAI].

INTELLIGENCE BUREAU (Home Department)

Extract from a Report, Dated 8.3.1946 from the Deputy Central Intelligence Officer, Delhi

"As a protest against the Victory celebrations on 7.3.46, there was a complete hartal in Delhi and New Delhi. Besides shops, cinemas, educational institutions, mills and other big concerns were closed. Tramway workers were also on strike. In the early hours of the day, a party of local Communists accompanied by a few young Leaguers, including Anis Ahmed Hashmi, ex-General Secretary of the Provincial Muslim League, Delhi, went about in Sadar Bazar, Chandni Chowk and labour and mill areas, and induced the people to close their shops and observe a complete hartal. Some of the shopkeepers gladly agreed, while others could not refuse on account of fear lest their goods be forcibly taken out of their shops.

A mob, mainly consisting of goonda elements, a few communists and some students, burnt all the gates which were erected the city in different places for lighting purposes. They pulled down electric wires, broke electric bulbs fixed on trees and the Clock Tower in Chandni Chowk and set fire to electric and telephone poles on the road. The mob then proceeded towards the Delhi Main Railway Station. One Octroi Post and a small rationing office were burnt and a III Class Railway Booking Office was attacked. Cash amounting to about Rs 2500 was looted, tickets thrown out, almirahs broken and Railway Babus assaulted. The mob also threw stones on the Wavell Canteen and broke its glasses [windowpanes]. At the Railway Station, 4 military lorries were reported to have been set on fire. Batches carrying black flags and Communist flags paraded the streets and bazaars of the City shouting anti-British and anti-Victory slogans. In the evening, a mob collected round the Town Hall and set fire to it. Some Congressmen persuaded them not to destroy public property, but no one cared and in a few minutes a large portion of the building was set ablaze. The Police used tear gas to disperse the crowd. Simultaneously, another heavy crowd collected near the Fire Brigade on the Queen's road, set fire to some lorries and damaged the Fire Brigade Station and thus nothing could be done for a long time to put out the fire in the Town Hall. Tear gas was used repeatedly at the Clock Tower to disperse the crowd.

Another mob attempted to set fire to the Reserve Bank and Imperial Bank building in Chandni Chowk, but the Police opened fire resulting in a few deaths and injury to some persons. Some men of the British Military Police were attacked by the mob near the Red Fort,

where the soldiers opened fire and killed two youngmen on the spot. The mob then proceeded towards Delhi Kishanganj Railway Station, and set the station on fire. Some of the goods were looted and destroyed along with some furniture. The Railway Clearing Accounts Office was also burnt.

A few private cars and a Police van are reported to have been attacked and burnt by crowds. The Electric Sub-Station in the Queen's Garden was completely smashed. Crowds, which collected on main roads and crossings, challenged and insulted men in English dress. Their hats and neckties were taken off if they did not do it themselves. A Bishop passing near the Fountain was stopped, his hat taken off and coat burnt. The mob also chased the Europeans who happened to go that way and threw stones on their vehicles. Mr Asaf Ali, along with some other prominent Congressmen of Delhi, appealed to the people to go home and not to cause disturbances.

As far as information goes, the Communists of Delhi, some Mill labourers, students and goonda elements from different groups are responsible for these disturbances."

G. Ahmed.
Deputy Director (A).
13.3.46.

9. Communists Party Analyses Victory Day Unrest

Extracts from a news report, 'City's hartal, workers' strike.'

People's Age, 31 March 1946.

New Delhi, March 25.... To understand the Government's blind vindictiveness and the Congress leaders' exasperation with the Delhi Communists, it is necessary to know what happened in Delhi before, during the after Victory Day on March 7.

The people of Delhi were greatly moved by the stirring demonstrations in Bombay, Calcutta, and Karachi in support of the RIN Ratings, but they were greatly disappointed at the Congress and the League organising no protest action in Delhi. No mass meeting or hartal was called either by the Congress or the League against Police and Military zoolum all over the country. The Communist Party organised a protest rally on the 25th February. It called upon the people, particularly the workers, to boycott the Victory celebrations and observe V-Day as a Protest Day against Military atrocities on the citizens of Calcutta, Bombay and Karachi.

Congress-League Against Positive Action

The Congress and the League also had given a call for the boycott of the Victory celebrations but their call was meant to be merely symbolic and they had never intended to use the occasion for a mighty protest action of the people of Delhi. The Communist Party's call, therefore, unnerved them and both the Congress and the League started campaigning against any positive action on Victory Day.

The Secretary of the Provincial Congress Committee issued a Press statement and a poster asking the people to boycott the Victory celebrations but not to participate in any strike or demonstrations organised by any political elements in Delhi, meaning thereby the Communist Party.

The Hindustan Mazdoor Sewak Sangh propagated among textile workers against the strike, spreading the absurd slander that the Communists wanted the strike because they wanted to lead the workers to join the celebrations which were being boycotted by the citizens!

The Communists, they said, had received orders from the Government for this purpose. Shopkeepers were instructed by the Congress to keep their shops open and not to observe hartal under any circumstances unless called upon by the Congress to do so.

Inside the Provincial League Council an anti-strike resolution was passed by 19 votes against 18 although the Muslim masses were for strike. As a protest against this decision of the Provincial Muslim League, its General Secretary, Anis Hashmi, resigned his office.

People Ready for Action

Despite these decision of the Congress and the League, the masses behind them were bitterly indignant against the Government's repressive policy and its determination to proceed with the Victory celebrations in Delhi against the unanimous opposition of the citizens both Hindus and Muslims.

While the workers in practically every industry wholeheartedly supported the Communist Party's call for strike, some confusion was caused among Hindu and Muslim shopkeepers by the attitude adopted by the Congress and the League.

Encouraged by the attitude of the Congress and the League, the Chief Commissioner of Delhi issued orders asking the shopkeepers to keep open their shops till midnight on Victory Day, and officials began putting pressure for illuminating the shops. In utter disregard of popular feeling the authorities erected arches in Chandni Chowk, Delhi's main bazaar, and decorated them with electric bulbs. The Deputy Commissioner overruled the elected Municipal Commissioners' objection against illuminating the Town Hall and Clock Tower in defiance of public opinion.

It was in this atmosphere that the Communist Party called upon the merchants and shopkeepers of Delhi and New Delhi to observe complete hartal and stand solidly with the working-class to protest against the mailed fist policy of the British Imperialists.

The Communist Party also called a mass rally at 11 o'clock on the 7th at Urdu Park. The Congress and the League announced no rally but the Congress leftist groups consisting of the Forward Blocists and the Congress Socialists announced a hunger parade on the Gandhi Grounds.

On the evening of March 6, the Police seized the Communist Party's poster announcing hartal and meeting on the 7th, but hundreds of fresh posters were written by hand and another was printed overnight.

Response to Call of Communists

Popular response next day was tremendous and opened the eyes of the Government and the National leaders. Delhi had never seen such a complete strike since the Khilafat days. All the Hindu and Muslim shops in Delhi and New Delhi were closed. All transport was suspended and there was complete strike of the municipal and factory workers. Only the Delhi Electric Supply and Tramway Co (DEST) Power House was running according to the previous decision of the Union not to cause inconvenience to the public.

As scheduled, a mammoth mass rally was held at Urdu Park at noon, under the auspices of the Communist Party. Shakil Ahmed, member of the Provincial Committee, presided, and speeches were made condemning Police and Military repression in Bombay, Calcutta, Karachi, etc.

While the meeting was in progress, news reached us that people in Chandhi Chowk had destroyed and burnt Victory arches, and smashed electric bulbs meant for illumination. After the meeting was over, the Communist Party sent squads to ask the people to remain peaceful and desist from burning, etc.

But the people were bitterly indignant over Government's action in decorating bazaars and celebrating Victory Day in the teeth of popular opposition. Meanwhile, the Police had made lathi charges and teargas attacks, and clashes started between the Police and the people.

Military Called Out

The Military was called out and the situation became tenser every moment. The people would not even listen to their leaders. Their reply was, why all these illuminations, decorations and Union Jacks except to spite us and make fun of our slavery?

It was in this situation that the Military let loose terror upon the people. The people retaliated by burning down Government property and setting fire to the Town Hall and the Reserve Bank on which flew the Union Jacks.

But was it pure "goondaism" as Government and Congress leaders alleged? It cannot be overlooked that no private shops or property was looted. Popular wrath was directed against Government and Municipal buildings, because of the Government policy of repression.

The responsibility for the destruction of the Town Hall must be placed upon the Deputy Commissioner whose blind bureaucratic policy of insisting on decorations in defiance of unanimous popular opinion resulted in so much loss of life and property.

Why must the Government force celebrations over Delhi when every man, women and child was strongly opposed to them? ...

1.ix PROTESTS AGAINST RATION CUTS

1. Hunger March Against Ration Cuts in Allahabad

Extracts from a news report, 'All-parties' joint protests against ration cut.'

People's Age, 24 February 1946.

Allahabad, Feb. 16. "As the Ganga and the Jamna meet together at the Sangham so have Hindus and Muslims united today in Allahabad, thus opening a new chapter in our common history," in these glowing words Bishambarnath Pandey, President of the City Congress Committee, congratulated citizens of Allahabad for having organised a joint protest meeting and a joint hunger march against the Government's cut in ration.

It was one of the biggest All-Party joint demonstrations Allahabad has ever seen.

The hunger march which had preceded the meeting was a unique assembly of banners. Tricolours and the League flags, together with the striped banner of the Nationalist Muslims and the Red Flag of the Communist Party, made a medley of colours.

The best organised procession were of the workers of the Government and other presses, waterworks, electric power house, and the Fort. Their banners and hundreds of Red Flags made a brave show, while onlookers smiled to see Ekka and Tonga horses marching alongside with Red Hammer and Sickles emblems flying.

The procession was a hunger march, and the majority of the demonstrators, were industrial workers, petty shopkeepers and the town poor. Slogans raised were all unity slogans, the most popular being, "Roti ke liye ek ho", "Bhai bai ek ho", "Hindu Muslim ek ho", "Dunia ke

Mazdoor ek ho", But when the processionists passed a Government building or office, thundering shouts of "Hukumat-i-Bartania barbad", and "Angrezi Samrajshahi ka nash ho", rent the air, Muslim and Hindus shouting with equal zeal.

Communist Party Takes Initiative

How had this unity been brought about when only a few days before Subhas Jayanti demonstrators had threatened to burn down the Communist Party Office and blows had been freely exchanged between rival groups hoisting the League and Congress flags on local schools?

It was the result of the initiative taken by the Communist Party in protesting against the reduction of existing ration from 12 chattaks to 8 and of the wheat quota to 2 chattaks and their demand for joint action by all parties....

On the 12th evening, a rally of 5000 workers and others was organised in Mohammadali Park. Dr Ahmad, the Communist leader, addressing the rally, once more declared that the Communist Party appealed to all, specially to the Congress and the League, to come on a joint platform for saving the people from hunger and starvation.

Finally, the Congress and League leaders were induced to give a joint call for complete hartal, a joint procession and a joint meeting.

The hartal in the city on the 12th was one of the most complete ever seen....

2. Congress Opposes Strike Against Ration Cuts in Kanpur

Extracts from a report, 'Cawnpore workers lead battle.'

People's Age, 24 February 1946.

All over the UP, mighty mass demonstrations of the people have taken place protesting against the Government's order reducing the ration and the wheat quota. People of all parties and sections of opinion, Hindus and Muslims, have rallied together shoulder to shoulder against the Government's new regime of hunger.

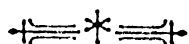
The All-Party Protest Rally held at Allahabad was one of the biggest gatherings of recent years.

But in Cawnpore, the Congress leaders made this one more occasion to fight, not the bureaucrats, but the Communists and the Mazdoor Sabha (Red Flag), the powerful Trade Union of the Cawnpore textile workers.

The most extraordinary scenes were witnessed in Cawnpore on Monday, February 11, when the local Congress Committee joined hands with the Police and the notorious European mill owners and went all-out to break the one-day protest general strike of the workers against the ration cut....

The Congress leaders tried to disrupt the Sunday rally of the workers starting the scare that there would be 'maramari' and firing at the meeting. But it did not work and thirty thousand workers gathered to greet Joshi [P.C. Joshi, General Secretary, Communist Party of India] and take the decision to observe a protest strike on Monday.

The Muslim League and Scheduled Caste leaders were present at the rally. Maulana Hasrat Mohani, the hoary League leader, expressed full support to the strike....



1.x DELHI POLICE AND NATIONALIST MUSLIMS

1. Police Disperse Meeting of Nationalist Muslims in Ballimaran, Delhi

Extracts from a news report, 'Curfew imposed in several areas of city.'

Hindustan Times, 10 May 1946.

A number of people were injured on Wednesday night when the police made a lathi-charge and used tear gas to disperse a meeting of Nationalist Muslims at Baradari Sher Afghan Khan near Ballimaran, Delhi. The meeting was being held under the joint auspices of the Jamiat-ul-Ulema-i-Hind and Majlis-i-Ahrar. Nearly 40 injured were rendered first aid by Jamiat-ul-Ulema workers. Maulana Hafizur Rahman, General Secretary of the Jamiat-ul-Ulema, was affected by tear gas.

The meeting was scheduled to begin at 11-30 p.m. Jamiat and Ahrar workers had erected a pandal on the road near the market. No one had objected to it during the day while the construction work was going on, but shortly before the meeting was to begin, the authorities took objection to the meeting being held there as, in their opinion, it would obstruct the traffic. The pandal thereupon was shifted to the Baradari. A majority of people left the main road, but some people still remained there. When Maulana Ahmed Saeed, Vice-President of the Jamiat-ul-Ulema, was delivering the inaugural speech, the police lathi-charged and used tear gas....

The Deputy Commissioner of Delhi has issued the following communique: "The Jamiat-ul-Ulema-i-Hind and Ahrar parties insisted on holding a public meeting in Ballimaran in Delhi city on the night of May 8 in spite of persuasion and warning by the District authorities. The audience numbering approximately 3000 completely obstructed the public thoroughfare...."

2. M. Asaf Ali Demands Enquiry into Dispersal of Nationalist Muslim Meeting in Ballimaran

Extracts from letter by W. Christie, Chief Commissioner, to F.H. Teal, Deputy Commissioner, Delhi; dated 21 May 1946.

File No. 1(27)/1946; Home Branch, Chief Commissioner's Office, Delhi (1946); Department of Delhi Archives.

Delhi, 21st May 1946.

My dear Teal,

Mr Asaf Ali has sent me a copy of a resolution which he says was passed in connection with the incident on the 8th instant. He does not say when it was passed or by whom. A copy is attached....

W. Christie.
21/5/46.

Enclosure

We the undersigned representatives of various political organisations of Delhi strongly protest against the action of the local authorities in dispersing a peaceful meeting of thousands of law

abiding citizens of Delhi on 8th May 1946 at 11.30 p.m. in front of Baradari Sher Afgan Khan at Ballimaran. The meeting was organised under auspices of Jamiatul Ulema and Majlis-i-Ahrar and was to be presided over by Maulana Ahmad Said, President Provincial Jamiatul Ulema who is a prominent leader of all India fame. The Maulana was himself present there before the incident took place. Without any warning to the President or the speakers or the audience who were squatting on the ground unaware of any designs on the part of the authorities a posse of police suddenly attacked the gathering with a ruthless lathi charge wounding hundreds of innocent people and endangering valuable lives by exploding grenades of tear gas inside the premises enclosed on three sides where speakers were sitting. This action of the police was highly provocative and inhuman and totally against all tenets of civil liberty and freedom of speech and gathering. In view of the fact that the local Government has been seeking cooperation of all the political parties of Delhi for maintaining peace and order and this cooperation has been willingly given to them it is our unanimous demand that they should immediately institute a public enquiry into the conduct of their officials who were responsible for the disturbance and injury to hundreds of innocent people.

3. Authorities' Version of Events at Ballimaran

Extracts from a letter by F.H. Teal, Deputy Commissioner, to W. Christie, Chief Commissioner, Delhi; dated 23 May 1946.

File No. 1(27)/1946; Home Branch, Chief Commissioner's Office, Delhi (1946); Department of Delhi Archives.

Delhi, 23rd May, 1946.

My dear Mr Christie,

... The facts of the case are that the Majlis-e-Ahrar and the Jamiat-ul-Ulema insisted on holding a meeting on a public road in Ballimaran, Delhi City, thereby completely obstructing traffic on that road. The intention of these bodies to hold this meeting first came to the notice of the CID at about 5 p.m. K.S. Manzar Wahid, Inspector of Police, CID, contacted the organisers, namely Maulana Ahmad Said, Zahir Uddin, Mohammad Husain and Mukhtiar Ahmad, and endeavoured to persuade them not to hold the meeting on a public road. He warned them that if they did so and obstructed traffic, they would be committing an offence under the Police Act. They would not listen either to reason or warnings and at 6 p.m. he sent for Inspector Jaswant Singh of the City Kotwali. Both these officers then spent two hours in trying to persuade the organisers not to hold a meeting on that road.... Their persuasions and warnings had absolutely no effect. The Deputy Supdt of Police ... then informed the Senior Superintendent of Police and he and I went to the spot, where we arrived at about 11.30 p.m. The meeting had started about 15 minutes previously and had opened with recitations from the Qoran. When I arrived, an individual was making a heated speech through a loudspeaker. He stopped when we approached and I warned the assembly that they were committing an offence under the Police Act, that they were an unlawful assembly and that I gave them three minutes in which to disperse. They stood their ground and wanted to enter into an argument with me. I did not see any reason for further arguments, as these had been going on for over six hours. I therefore directed that the assembly should be dispersed. It is absolutely untrue that any "ruthless lathi charge, wounding hundreds of innocent people" took place. As a matter of fact, the majority of the crowd did not show any courage, but started to run in all directions

as a Police force approached them. There were some 3000 persons present, entirely blocking the whole road. They disappeared within ten minutes which indicates, I think, that they mainly fled of their own accord....

F.H. Teal.

1.xi STUDENT PROTESTS

1. Protests in the United Provinces Against Repression of Student Activists

Extracts from a news report, 'Anti repression day in UP.'

Hindustan Times, 24 January 1946.

The Anti Repression Day to protest against the treatment meted out to the students of Agricultural College, Cawnpore, Bareilly College and several other educational institutions in the UP was observed at many places in the province on Tuesday.

At Lucknow, the University and almost all colleges and schools remained closed. The students started in a procession from their respective institutions and marching through the main thoroughfares gathered in Aminuddaula Park. A meeting was held there and a resolution condemning the persecution of the students of various colleges by the authorities was passed....

Bareilly observed the Anti Repression Day in a fit manner. The students of a large number of educational institutions abstained from their classes. They joined a procession which terminated at the Moti Park at which a mammoth students' meeting was held under the auspices of the Students Congress.

Mr Rafi Ahmad Kidwai's [Congress left leader, MLA, later to become Union Cabinet Minister] statement defending the students' demand was read out....

2. Clashes Between Hindu and Muslim Students of Lahore

Extracts from a news report, 'Students fired on in Lahore.'

Hindustan Times, 10 March 1946.

Lahore, March 9. Eleven students, including two with gunshot wounds, were removed to hospitals following an exchange of brickbats between Hindu and Muslim students and the subsequent police firing outside the Sanatan Dharam College in Lahore today.

Trouble started when a mock funeral procession organized by Muslim students to register their protest against the formation of the Coalition Party reached the Sanatan Dharam College beyond the Secretariat on the Lower Mall and counter-slogans were raised by students from the Sanatan Dharam College. The exchange of slogans soon developed into an exchange of brickbats which continued for nearly half an hour.

The police, who were following the processionists, did not interfere until an inspector of police was hit on the face by a brickbat. The police then fired five shots resulting in injuries to two students.

There was no direct clash between the processionists and the Hindu students of the Sanatan Dharam College because the latter remained within the premises of the College....

Before the disturbances occurred in front of the college, a tonga flying the Red Flag and fitted with a microphone and loudspeaker plied up and down the Lower Mall. The occupants, reported to be Communists, were heard exhorting the demonstrators to break Glancy-Khizr axis and compel the British to quit India.

A big Muslim crowd staged a hostile demonstration in front of Malil Khizr Hyat's residence in Queens Road in the afternoon....

The demonstrators subsequently dispersed peacefully on the advice of the Muslim League leaders.—API.

3. Lahore Communist Party Accuses Congress of Communist-baiting

Letter to Mr Bhimsen Sacher, Leader, Congress Assembly Party, Lahore, by Teja Singh Swatantra, Secretary, Punjab Provincial Committee, Communist Party of India; dated Lahore, 9 March 1946.

File No. G-23 (Pt-2); All India Congress Committee Papers (1946) [NMML].

Lahore, 9th March, 1946.

Dear Friend,

We have just received a report of the speech which Seth Sudershan has made before the students of the Sanatan Dharam College, Lahore just after their clash today with the Muslim demonstrators. In that speech he has made wild allegations:

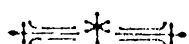
- (1) That the clash had been incited by the Communist Party.
- (2) That the plan first had been secretly made before hand in a meeting of the Communist Party in which were fixed route and the slogans of the processionist[s] with the object of provoking a clash between the Hindus and the Muslims.
- (3) He further alleged that it were the Communist girls who were Hindus, who had led the procession of the Muslim women demonstrators.

All these are white lies. We draw your attention to the gravity of mischief which such incendiary statements are calculated to create in the atmosphere of today.

Such Communist-baiting is simply disgraceful. Malicious and deliberate lies cannot bring credit to any organisation and cannot I am sure, be approved by any honest Congressman.

In the name of the Provincial Committee I lodge an emphatic protest against this most irresponsible behaviour of Seth Sudershan. I am doing so in the firm belief that you fully share our views that patriotism demands no head breaking amongst ourselves. The situation facing the country today demands not the widening of the gulf between us but joining hands by all who stand to serve the people and solve the grave problems of famine and slavery threatening our very existence.

Teja Singh Swatantra.
Secretary.



4. Lahore Communist Party Statement Regarding Clash Between Hindu-Muslim Students

Press statement by Teja Singh Swatantra, Secretary, Punjab Provincial Committee, Communist Party of India; dated Lahore, 10 March 1946

File No. G-23 (Pt-2); All India Congress Committee Papers (1946) [NMML].

"We read with pain in today's newspapers the speech of Seth Sudarshan [Lahore Congressman] that the Communists had incited yesterday's communal clash. The allegations are not only entirely baseless but totally mischievous. The whole purpose of Seth Sudarshan's speech was to incite the mob fury against the Communist Party.

"Everyone knows that we stand for Congress-League unity and carry the message of unity as the only way to freedom.

"To compare yesterday's Lahore incident with the recent happenings in Calcutta and Bombay is fantastic. In Calcutta and Bombay Hindus and Muslims unitedly faced the police and military bullets. Here it was a clash between two sections of our own people. Lahore incident was a common shame to us all.

"Instead of condemning the most provocative action of the police Seth Sudarshan tried to divert the attention of the people by his Communist-baiting.

"As to the allegations that Communists in a tonga exhorted the demonstrators the fact is as follows. No Tonga was sent out by the Communist Party. In fact the Tonga Driver's Union workers were announcing a public meeting to protest against Delhi firing. The tonga reached the spot after the clash and firing had already taken place. It had nothing to do with the demonstration.

"In the end we would like to state that what is most important today is not to blame one or the other, but how to keep peace. We earnestly appeal to Congress and League leaders that in view of the tension prevailing in the city joint peace squads must be brought out. The squads must go round the city exhorting people to keep peace so that there is no recurrence of yesterday's unfortunate incidents."

5. Delhi Students' 9 August Demonstration

News report, 'Students' procession tear-gassed in Delhi.'

Hindustan Times, 10 August 1946.

A number of students received minor injuries when the police made a lathi charge and used tear gas to disperse a students' procession in Chandni Chowk, Delhi, on Friday morning.

Thirty-eight people, including six girls, were arrested. Among those arrested are the President and Secretary respectively of the Delhi Students' Congress, Mr Madan Mohan Sharma, Joint Secretary of the Delhi Provincial Students' Federation, Mr Boren Roy, Mr N.M. Seth, Mr Anand Prakash and Mr Dhanubhai Patel, Mr Rajeshwar Bali, Mr Manohar Lal Khanna, Mr Harbhajan Singh Ahluwalia, Miss Lila, Miss Vijaya and Miss Kamala, Miss Shakuntala, Miss Kalyani Bose and Miss Daya.

The procession, which was a part of the August 9 programme, started from Students' Park, Kashmere Gate, following the decision of the students to defy the Chief Commissioner's ban on processions. When the procession reached the Red Fort it was stopped by the police but the processionists broke through the police cordon and proceeded towards the Clock Tower. They were again stopped by the police near Dariba Kalan. The processionists then squatted

on the ground and started shouting slogans. After some time they tried to force their way, when the police used tear-gas and made a mild lathi charge.

Police Pickets Posted

The police took possession of all the National Flags being carried by the processionists. Soon after the use of the tear gas small batches of demonstrators shouting 'Quit India' and other slogans paraded the streets. Armed police pickets were posted in the area and police lorries patrolled the city. Groups of people with Tricolours in their hands collected in front of the Kotwali and from time to time policemen swooped on them brandishing their lathis and shouting *maro maro*, and dispersed them.

Several Congress leaders, including Messrs. Jugal Kishore Khanna and Radha Raman, arrived on the scene on hearing of the disturbances and later saw the authorities and the arrested persons.

Another demonstration was held at about 1 p.m. when the students marched in twos carrying National Flags.

The Delhi Students' Congress and the Students' Federation have passed resolutions condemning the police action in dispersing the procession and congratulating those arrested by the police.

Both the Students' Congress and the Federation have called a strike in Delhi schools and colleges on Saturday as a protest against the action of the police. There will be a meeting of students in Students' Park, Kashmere Gate, on Saturday at 8 a.m.

Official Version

An official *communiqué* says: "At about 10-45 a.m. today about 1000 youths formed a procession after they had decided at a meeting to defy the ban on processions and proceeded into the city. They were stopped by the police party under the Additional Superintendent of Police, warned of the consequences and ordered to disperse. On refusal to disperse they were dispersed by a small quantity of gas smoke. There were no casualties.

"Twenty-seven persons mostly, but not all, believed to be students, including six girls, who refused to give their names and addresses and insisted that they should be prosecuted have been arrested and remanded to judicial custody."

1.xii POLITICAL PRISONERS

1. Questions in Legislative Assembly Regarding Political Prisoners and Their Release

Extracts from a debate in Central Legislative Assembly on 23 January 1946.

File No. 22/5/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India [NAI].

The Hon'ble Sir John Thorne: Sir, I expect my Honourable friends want me to present a target to them rather than present the Government case, but still I do not wish to hang back when they want to hear what I have to say. I must decline the invitation of my Honourable friend the Mover to take any responsibility for persons detained under orders of the provincial Governments. The Ordinance confers powers of detention both on the Central Government and on the provincial Governments and in practice those powers have been separately used

and enforced.... I quite agree with Mr Saksena that the end of the war produced a new situation.... Now, Sir, the policy agreed on between the centre and the provinces was to release persons detained under Ordinance III as quickly as was reasonably and safely possible. That was a policy agreed soon after the end of the war, and I can claim that is the policy that has been followed in the succeeding months. I hope I have made it clear that I do not take the responsibility for the administration of the Governor's provinces; but I have figures from those provinces which I will quote in support of my case that we have proceeded as quickly as was reasonably and safely to be expected with the release of detenus.

Now, Sir, in the Governors' provinces in August 1945 when the war ended the number of persons detained under Ordinance III was 6816. That number has now fallen—my latest figures are, I think, for the 15th January—to 3109.

Several Honourable Members: Shame.

The Honourable Sir John Thorne: My Honourable friends cry "Shame."

Prof. N.G. Ranga: It is worse than shame; it is a disgrace.

The Honourable Sir John Thorne: May I explain a little what that figure represents? 3109 is the total figure. Of these by far the greater number—over two-third—are Hurs detained by the Government of Sind. Well, Sir, the Hurs are not my business, and I have not made a special study of their doings. But it is common knowledge that for years, and especially of recent years, this faction in Sind has pursued a course of lawless and extreme violence—murder, decoity, maltreatment of all kinds, finally the derailment of passenger train, those are all to the credit of the Hurs.

Diwan Chaman Lal: Why don't you try them?

The Honourable Sir John Thorne: Not only have they committed those crimes but they have created situations, I understand, in which it was impossible to get a conviction against any Hur. Witnesses were intimidated and witnesses were murdered. That has been going on for the last so many years.

Sardar Mangal Singh: What is the number of Hurs detained?

The Honourable Sir John Thorne: The number of Hurs detained at the present moment is 2506. But what I wish to point out is that not only are they not my business, but they are not the business of this House. I myself shall not be a party to any decision or vote of this House which amounts to a vote of censure on the Sind Government for their treatment of the Hurs or a demand that they shall immediately release the Hurs whom they are now detaining. (Interruption). So much for the Provincial Governments.

For the Central Government, the corresponding figures are very modest. In August 1945 there were 22 persons detained under the orders of the Central Government. At the present day there are three. In the Chief Commissioner's Provinces which of course are generally, with the exception of Baluchistan, under the control of the Governor-General, the number in August 1945 was 17, and the number is now one. Let me repeat those figures, gentlemen because they are figures for which I am responsible.

Prof. N.G. Ranga: Does this number include Jai Prakash Narain?

The Honourable Sir John Thorne: May I ask that I may not be interrupted as I have very short time at my disposal. If my Honourable friends would wait, they will know everything.

An honourable Member: The Honourable Member may have five minutes more.

Mr Chairman (Sir Cowasjee Jehangir): Will the Honourable Members just listen?

Diwan Chaman Lal: Mr Chairman, it is a very important matter.

Mr Chairman (Sir Cowasjee Jehangir): But I cannot extend the Honourable Member's time.

Diwan Chaman Lall: We do not want extension of time. We want the information.

The Honourable Sir John Thorne: The total for British India in June 1943 was 14,500. As I have said, in August 1945 that total dropped. The total for the whole of British India, including the portions for which I am responsible, was 6855, and on the 15th January of this year the total is 3113.

Maulana Zafar Ali Khan: Are they ordinary criminals or patriots?

The Honourable Sir John Thorne: I was not proposing to conceal from this House what as a matter of fact every Member of this House knows already, namely, the names of the four persons detained under orders either of the Central Government or of Chief Commissioners. Their names are: Jai Prakash Narain, Ram Manohar Lohia, Sardar Sardul Singh Koveesher, and Krishna Nair. In the last few days I have myself seen each of those four persons. I conversed freely with them. I should like here and now to say that I am indebted to them for a very full and frank discussion and the courtesy with which they received someone whom they may not have been expected to regard with very great affection, and generally for the light I received from them on the questions which I have to consider in regard to detenus.

Prof. N.G. Ranga: They did not look dangerous.

The Honourable Sir John Thorne: In our discussions I should prefer not to go into what was said in any great detail. I would prefer to wait. They spoke frankly to me; I spoke frankly to them. I should perhaps be taking an advantage of them if I said what they said to me when they cannot say what I said to them. But I questioned them in particular on their attitude to violence as a political method and as to their views on the present political situation. I received from them very interesting answers to the questions I put on those subjects, and I have no doubt that they gave me their confidence. They made no secret of their views, and I have no reason to suppose that they set out to mislead me.

Mr M. Asaf Ali: Are they to be detained for their views? Is that the principle of the Government?

The Honourable Sir John Thorne: As regards the present position of these four persons, it is that the orders under which they are at present detained have still some months to go. I think June and July are the months in which those orders would, unless previously cancelled, expire. I do not propose to stand on those dates. It was only a few days since I saw these gentlemen and the matter which I am now considering is to whether there is any good reason in respect of any of them for anticipating the dates which would terminate the orders under which they are at present detained. One thing I will say on that, and that is that I should not feel myself justified in forming a decision without consulting certain Provincial Governments. I do not think I need give reasons for that. Briefly, the reasons are that at any rate three of these persons are residents of areas which are not under the direct administration of the Government of India, and it is right and proper that the Governments of those areas should give their views on the question of release of these persons.

Shri Sri Prakasa: Did you consult these Governments when you detained them?

The Honourable Sir John Thorne: But I wish to make this quite clear that the responsibility is that of the Government of India. The Government of India will not take shelter under the Provincial Governments any more than we expect Provincial Governments to take shelter under the Government of India. The responsibility is here. I am aware of the weight of it and I would ask this House to give the Government and myself in particular credit for giving every earnest consideration to the questions which have now to be considered.

2. Numbers Imprisoned Under Ordinance III

Table showing number of prisoners in detention as on 1 March 1946.

File No. 8/5/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India [NAI].

Statement showing the number of persons in detention on the 1st March, 1946,
according to the classes given in the Home Department
Letter No. 44/13/45-Political (I) dated the 17th March, 1945

Province	Class I	Class II	Class III	Class IV	Total
Madras	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
Bombay	Nil	Nil	48	Nil	48
Bengal	Nil	5	176	Nil	181
UP	Nil	Nil	29	4	33
Punjab	Nil	Nil	Nil	3	3
Bihar	Nil	Nil	29	38	57
CP & Berar	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
Assam	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
NWFP	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
Orissa	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
Sind	Nil	Nil	Nil	2196	2196
Coorg	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
Delhi	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
Ajmer Merwara	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
Baluchistan	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
Centre	Nil	Nil	2	Nil	2
Total	Nil	5	274	2241	2520

3. Political Detenus, and Their Release: Debate in Council of State

Extracts from debate in Council of State on 11 March 1946.

File No. 8/5/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India [NAI].

The Hon. Pandit Hirday Nath Kunzru: Is there any chance of those who are now in detention in the provinces being released at an early date?

The Hon. Mr A.E. Porter: That, Sir, as I have said in my answer, is a matter for the Provincial Government concerned.

The Hon. Pandit Hirday Nath Kunzru: In view of the fact that a uniform policy is being followed by the Central and Provincial Governments, can the Honourable Member give us an indication of the possibility or the probability of the release of the men who are now in detention?

The Hon. the President: That is a hypothetical question.

The Hon. Pandit Hirday Nath Kunzru: It is not a hypothetical question. The Honourable Member said that agreement has been arrived at between the Central and the Provincial Governments in regard to the policy to be pursued and I asked the Honourable Member to tell us whether according to this policy a large number of men will be released soon.

The Hon. Mr A.E. Porter: A large number of men have been released. Of the number which I have given, 2241 are of the goonda class. That leaves 279 in what you might call the noncriminal class. I suggest that 279 is not a large number. The policy is to release these men

gradually with such expedition as is consistent with security and the maintenance of law and order. In these circumstances I am not in a position to say when any particular number of men will be released. Inevitably, Sir, there will be a certain number of men who will have to be kept on considerably longer than others.

The Hon. Pandit Hirday Nath Kunzru: Are these 2200 goondas in detention in Bengal?

The Hon. Mr A.E. Porter: No, Sir. There are no goondas in detention in Bengal.

The Hon. Mr Hossain Imam: Could the Honourable Member indicate why they are being detained under the Ordinance and not prosecuted under the ordinary law of the land, goondas or no goondas?

The Hon. Mr A.E. Porter: As I have said, I am concerned with two prisoners whose cases are under constant consideration. I am not concerned with the other cases. That is the responsibility of the Provincial Government.

The Hon. Pandit Hirday Nath Kunzru: Can the Honourable Member give us the names of the two persons with whom the Central Government is concerned?

The Hon. Mr A.E. Porter: I can, Sir.

The Hon. Pandit Hirday Nath Kunzru: What are they?

The Hon. Mr A.E. Porter: Mr Jai Prakash Narain and Mr Ram Manohar Lohia.

The Honourable Rai Bahadur Sri Narain Mahtha: Are they classed as goondas? (No answer).

4. Allegations of Torture in Lahore Fort Jail

Clipping titled 'Police atrocities in Lahore Fort' from *Hindustan Times*, 28 February 1946, is included in the file. Extracts are reproduced below as well as the comments made by the Home Department, in connection with the clipping.

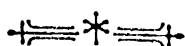
File No. 22/45/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India [NAI].

Lahore, Feb. 26. Sardar Sardul Singh Caveeshar, acting President of the Forward Bloc, who was released during the weekend after five years' detention, speaking at a public meeting organised by the Lahore Students' Congress to welcome him demanded the appointment of a commission consisting of High Court judges to inquire into brutal and inhumane treatment meted out to detenus and political prisoners in the Lahore Fort.

He said that detenus and political prisoners brought from all over the country to the Lahore Fort were subjected to indescribable atrocities. To extract information from them they were kept in red-hot chambers and made to sit on wooden planks for days together without permitting them to sleep. He declared that if the allegations made by him proved untrue he would be prepared to meet the cost of the inquiry.

Sardar Caveeshar demanded the release of Jai Prakash Narain, Ram Manohar Lohia and other political prisoners who were still in jail...

[Regarding allegations made in the clipping, F.G. Cracknell, Director, Intelligence Bureau, Home Department, in passing the file on to J.A. Thorne, Home Member, had the following comment to make: "... The allegations appear to be unfounded...."]



5. Alleged Torture of Ram Manohar Lohia in Lahore Fort Jail

Extracts from a debate in the Legislative Assembly on 23 March 1946.

File No. 22/1/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India [NAI].

Mr M.R. Masani: Was the complaint made to the Honourable Member by Dr Lohia identical with the complaint I am going to read from Dr Lohia's letter to Prof. Laski: "I was ill-treated in one way or another for four months and I was kept awake day after day and night after night. The longest single stretch ran into ten days and when I was assisted by the police in their efforts to make me stand, they wheeled me round on my manacled hands on the matted floor."

The Honourable Sir John Thorne: Yes, Sir, more or less, I do not think, if I may say so, that in my conversation with Dr Lohia, he was quite so picturesque as the description of the occurrences given in the statement.

Mr Sasanka Sekhar Sanyal: Did the Honourable Member consider the question of bringing the matter into court for enquiry?

The Honourable Sir John Thorne: I do not know how that can be done.

Mr Sasanka Sekhar Sanyal: Will the Honourable Members be pleased to state whether the allegations constitute an offence under the criminal law?

The Honourable Sir John Thorne: They would.

Mr Sasanka Sekhar Sanyal: In that case did the Honourable Member consider the question of bringing the matter before a magistrate or judge for an enquiry?

The Honourable Sir John Thorne: No, Sir.

Shri Sarat Chandra Bose: Is the Honourable Member prepared to agree to the appointment of a Committee of this House to go into the allegations made by Dr Lohia and by other prisoners in the Lahore Fort?

The Honourable Sir John Thorne: I cannot answer as regards the other prisoners in the Lahore Fort. But as regards Dr Lohia, I think the appointment of any such Committee would be quite infructuous.

Shri Mohan Lal Saksena: Then what is the remedy for a prisoner in the position of Dr Lohia who has been treated like that? Beyond making a complaint to the authorities, what other remedy could he have?

The Honourable Sir John Thorne: Well, Sir, Dr Ram Manohar Lohia did approach the Lahore High Court, I cannot from memory say whether it was once or twice. But he did present an application to the Lahore High Court and was, if my recollection is correct, heard.

Shri Mohan Lal Saksena: Is it not a fact that immediately after Dr Lohia's application came before the Lahore High Court, he was transferred to the United Provinces?

The Honourable Sir John Thorne: I must ask for notice of that, I am not certain. I do not think so.

6. Political Prisoners Release Campaign in Bengal

Extracts from an article, 'Bengal's forgotten warriors: Release campaign gets under way', by Nikhil Chakravarty.

People's Age, 26 May 1946.

Early in April when Gandhiji's powerful intervention with the Cabinet Mission brought about the release of Jai Prakash and others, there was widespread expectancy in Bengal that the

40 long-terms revolutionary prisoners who have between them served over 600 years in prison would also be set free. The hopes rose particularly because only a few weeks previously, the Punjab revolutionaries of the Lahore Conspiracy Case fame had been released.

But the hopes were soon belied. Our national leaders did not make their release a really vital issue with the Cabinet Mission and so the Bengal bureaucrats were allowed to continue as their gaolers.

Very soon after the Cabinet Mission's arrival in India, Sjt. J.C. Gupta—the President of the Pre-Reform Prisoners' Release Campaign Committee met Cripps and other members of the Mission and pressed for the release of the 40 prisoners, if only to create the necessary atmosphere of mutual goodwill.

Cripps showed an inclination to go over the heads of the bureaucrats, and asked Sjt. J.C. Gupta to see the Bengal Governor.

Meanwhile, the Campaign Committee sent up a memorandum to the Cabinet Mission in which an unanswerable case made out for their release.

Sjt. J.C. Gupta Meets Governor

On April 6th, Sjt. Gupta met the Bengal Governor, Sir Fredrick Burrows. But Burrows the "much boosted self-made Socialist Governor"—repeated parrot-like the old argument of the CID that these prisoners being terrorists could not be released.

When Sjt. Gupta showed how these prisoners had repudiated terrorism as a political weapon before Gandhiji in 1938, Burrows had nothing more to say than that he would not promise anything nor could he say that he would consider their cases.

In the usual manner the Governor enquired if the campaign had the support of all the parties, and presumably he did not expect to see the name of a prominent Leagueite, Chaudhury Moazzem Hossain (Lal Meah) as one of the Secretaries of the Committee.

Simultaneously with the curt refusal by the Governor came the banning of Kalpana Dutt's *Reminiscences of the Chittagong Armoury Raiders*, which contains an eloquent plea for their release.

Bureaucracy's Offensive

But what was more significant was the fact that along with the seizure of Kalpana's book, the Bengal police in course of their extensive searches all over the Province, seized copies of Niranjana Sen's book on the Pre-Reform prisoners, as also the documents of the Release Campaign Committee.

No doubt it was the bureaucracy's offensive against any renewed campaign for the release of the prisoners. But the Campaign Committee immediately took up the matter, issued statements to the Press showing appallingly serious condition of the prisoners' health.

In the case of one of the prisoners, Priyada Chakravarty, though his relatives were called by telegram to the hospital at Dacca because of his precarious condition, the police still refused to set him free.

In the case of another prisoner, signs of insanity were ignored and though he had been sent from there once to a mental hospital, he was yet kept in prison.

The Press took up the matter and the *Amrita Bazar Patrika* wrote a long editorial demanding their release. But more heartening was the initiative shown by the Chittagong residents in Calcutta who on their own issued a joint statement, signed among others by Dr B.B. Dutt, Controller of Examinations, Calcutta University, Mrs Nelli Sengupta, MLA, Sjt. Bina Das, MLA, Dr Benimadhab Barua, the noted Buddhist scholar and Dr Saraulah.

Public Meeting

They called a public meeting in Calcutta on April 22 to commemorate the battle of Jelalabad Hills where the Armoury Raiders had fought the military on the outskirts of Chittagong. A two minutes' silence was observed to honour the memory of those who fell at Jelalabad, 16 years ago.

At the meeting spoke Congress leaders like Mrs Nelli Sengupta and Sjt. J.C. Gupta, League leaders like Mr Hadibullah Bahar and Chaudhury Moazzem Hossain (Lal Meah), the Communist Sjt. Hiren Mukherjee and literary and educational figures like Sjt. Manik Bandopadhyay, Prof. K.P. Chattopadhyay and Dr B.B. Dutt.

The audience gave a great ovation to Sjt. Amulya Acharya, one of the Chittagong prisoners recently released after 10 years' imprisonment....

Sjt. Kiran Shankar Roy, rightly insisted that a wholesale jail delivery of all political prisoners, both detained and convicted, should be one of the priority items in the common programme of the Coalition, but Mr Suhrawardy, almost voicing the stand of the Secretariat bosses, agreed only to the release of the Security prisoners and promised merely to "examine" the cases of the convicted prisoners.

The League Press to its utter shame, kept silent over this issue, and forgot its elementary duty of forcing Suhrawardy to lend his unequivocal support to the demand for release, so surcharged was the entire atmosphere with communal passions and mutual suspicions.

The League leaders failed to realise that the support for release would have proved their patriotic bonafides before the entire nationalist camp in Bengal.

The Campaign Committee thereupon sent out a call for a Province-wide campaign; in every district, leaders of all parties and sections were urged to take up the question, so that the Ministry may realise that it was not sectional demand, but the demand of the entire people—Muslims as much as Hindu, and also that such a campaign might give the Ministry the strength to stand up to any obstinate veto that the Governor might put against release.

Within a few days a remarkable response was forthcoming.

Chittagong Shows Way

While previously the demand had been sectionally voiced, this time it drew the support of practically all sections of the people. No less significant was the support of the followers of the League in different districts.

Chittagong showed the way in demanding the release of her own heroes—the Armoury Raiders, and in this move, the local Muslim League took the lead along with the Communist Party.

Even today, reports of tremendous response are pouring in from North Bengal, from Dacca, Mymensingh, Comilla, Barisal and Birbhum.

Individual leaders came forward to issue Press statements: the noted writer Sjt. Tarashankar Banerji, the eminent scientist Dr Meghnad Saha, the Mayor of Calcutta and Mahasabha leader Sjt. Debendranath Mukerji openly urged their release.

Encouraging and emphatic response came from the League leaders—Mr Abdul Hamid Chaudhury, MLC, Dy. President of the Legislative Council, Mr B.M. Elias, MLA, the popular League leader from Bogra, Dr A.M. Malek, MLA, Mr Habibullah Bahar, MLA lent their open support, while Chaudhury Moazzem Hossain (Lal Meah) and Mr Bahar have been taking an active part in the agitation for release

All Political Groups Help

The Campaign Committee also received support from different political groups. Forward Bloc leaders like Sjt. Satya Baksi, Ashrufuddin Chaudhury, Revolutionary Socialist Party leaders like Sjt. Satis Sarkar, Sushil Banerji, Congress leaders like Sjt. Promode Ghosal and Jasida Bhattacharya, League leaders like Mr Habibullah Bahar and Nurul Huda have extended their open support to the Campaign Committee to launch a Province-wide campaign....

Responsibility of League Ministry

Over 80 League MLAs have sent in a written demand to Mr Suhrawardy urging release.

It is time for the League Ministry to realise that the demand for the release is no sectional clamour but the demand of over two thirds of even their own party. And with this powerful movement behind them it will not be difficult for them to stand up to Burrows and his *burra sahibs*.

And it is equally important for Congress leaders to realise that the people of Bengal, whether Hindu or Muslim, look towards them to fight for the release of Bengal's freedom warriors.

7. Popular Campaign for Release of Bengal Political Prisoners

Extracts from a news report, 'Province-wide campaign for release of Bengal's political prisoners' by Nikhil Chakravarty.

People's Age, 14 July 1946.

Calcutta, July 5. For the last two months, Bengal has been witnessing a remarkable popular movement throughout the length and breadth of the Province....

With the installation of the League Ministry, the Pre-Reform Release Campaign Committee under its energetic Secretaries, Niranjana Sen and Choudhury Moazzem Hossain (Lal Meah), appealed for a province-wide campaign for release so that the hands of the League Ministry might be strengthened in forcing the unwilling bureaucrats to release them.

The response to the appeal went beyond all expectations.

On previous occasions, whenever the Committee had made appeals for a campaign, it was only the Communist Party together with a sprinkling of individual Congressmen and others who responded.

Not Confined to Students or Political Workers

But this time, hundreds of statements signed jointly by Congressmen, Leaguers, Communists, Forward Blocists, Mahasabhaites and others came from every district—from district towns, sub-divisional centres and remote villages.

In the previous years, it was the students and political workers who organised such campaigns. But it was not so this time.

Among others some of the Calcutta's leading doctors like Dr Sundari Mohan das, Dr Abdul Malek themselves issued a statement in support of release.

Among Bengal's peasantry too, this call for release brought forth unprecedented stir.

Kisans of the Hajang belt of Mymensingh held meetings and demonstrations.

In the interior of the Untouchable kisan area, Pikhuvna, voices were raised for release.

From among Muslim kisans of Kishorganj and Dacca, there came immediate response.

And in the interior of Chittagong, there was a ceaseless campaign by *kisans* and *bhadralogs* together for the release of their own sons whom they had once provided succour and shelter in their battle against British imperialism sixteen years ago.

Stirring Among the Workers

But what surpassed everything was the remarkable stirring among the workers, not confined merely to those who owe allegiance to the Red Flag. The entire body of the working-class came forward to participate in this campaign. Pottery, *biri*, jute and textile, iron and steel, port, tea-workers of all industries came forward.

Of course, the entire *bhadralog* community of Bengal has come forward to demand release of the heroes who have passed into legend among them....

Campaign Committee Expands Scope

The Release Campaign Committee too has expanded its scope in these recent weeks in demanding the release of not only the 30 remaining Pre-Reform prisoners, including Chittagong Armoury Raiders, but 20 INA prisoners on some of whom barbarous tortures have been recently perpetrated in Dacca Jail and about 50 imprisoned naval ratings and sepoys who went on strike; and also in these meetings all parties have demanded withdrawal of bans on Subhas Chandra Bose.

The entire Press of Bengal with the exception of the *Statesman* and *Ananda Bazar Patrika*, has been giving full support to the campaign. *Amrita Bazar*, *Jugantar*, *Nationalist* (now run by Forward Bloc), *Bharat* (run by the official Congress group), and *Azad* (League daily) and the Communist daily *Swadhinata* have splashed every demand for release of prisoners....

80 League MLAs Demand Release

In the very first week, not less than 80 League MLAs sent memos to the Chief Minister Suhrawardy, demanding release....

European Group's Threats

It is understood that the European group in threatening the Ministry that if they release the prisoners, the Europeans in the Assembly will not permit any tampering with jute prices. The Ministry as it has a very precarious majority against the European and Congress opposition, fears that alienating the Europeans might mean fall of their Ministry....

8. Hunger Strike Threat by Bengal Political Prisoners

Extracts from a report, 'Will Bengal's imprisoned heroes be forced to go on hunger strike?'

People's Age, 18 August 1946.

From August 16, Bengal's long-term political prisoners will stake their lives by going on hunger-strike.

On July 24, Premier Suhrawardy gave a solemn promise to a huge public demonstration outside the Legislative Assembly that he would take a final decision on the question of the release of political prisoners by August 15.

But no progress seems to have been made till now. Why? ...

9. North West Frontier Province Ministry Allows Special Facilities for Political Prisoners

Extracts from a news report, 'Political prisoners' rights recognised in NWFP.'

Hindustan Times, 23 December 1946.

Peshawar, Dec. 22. The Congress Ministry in the North West Frontier Province is probably the first in India in providing all possible facilities to the political prisoners under the new rules for the classification of convicted and under-trial prisoners.

According to these rules, all persons detained in connection with or convicted for offences connected with political movements will be classified as "political prisoners" irrespective of the nature of proceedings taken against them, or the provision of the law under which they are detained, prosecuted, or convicted, provided that the offence does not involve violence.

All such prisoners shall belong to one class only, namely "political prisoners".

The political prisoners will be accommodated in association with each other but apart from other prisoners, as far as possible....

Chapter 2. Political Organizations

For reasons explicated in the Introduction, the selection of material for this chapter on organized political groups does not concentrate on high-level negotiations with the Cabinet Mission and the subsequent intricacies of Interim Government formation and functioning. These have been abundantly documented on Mansergh's volumes. Excerpts from speeches and, writing of major national leaders, as well as from High Command Level statements of the Congress and the Muslim League have also been kept minimal, for these, too are fairly easily available. The focus, instead, is principally on ground-level rhetoric and activity, and here certain interesting variations and discrepancies add to the significance of what otherwise might appear a rather uneven and even scrappy series of documents.

i. GENERAL

We begin with a summary of the 1946 election results (as a rough indicator of the relative strength of various political formations –only a very rough one, of course, due to a limited electorate of around thirty million), and a couple of Home Department reports on volunteer organizations. A major discrepancy immediately becomes apparent. The Congress had done very well in the elections except in the Muslim reserved seats, but the volunteer groups affiliated to it lagged way behind the Hindu communal outfits, particularly the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), and the Muslim National Guard of the League. The implications, particularly in terms of post-August 1946 developments, appear fairly obvious, and provide in addition a possible indicator of a shift away from agitational towards ministerial work on the part of the premier national party. The data about the RSS acquire a new importance too, in terms of today's political scenario. The relative strength of the volunteer organizations with communal ideologies needs to be related also to the absence in their case, throughout of British repression.

ii. CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY PROCEEDINGS, DECEMBER 1946

The Constituent Assembly, elected indirectly by the provincial legislatures, met for the first time on 9 December 1946. The Muslim League refused to participate, and this kept Muslim representation absurdly low (only four among those who presented their credentials on the opening day –Maulana Azad, Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, Asaf Ali, and Rafi Ahmed Kidwai). The debate that began on 13 December on the Aims and Objects Resolution moved by Nehru still remains highly significant, for two reasons. The Resolution was the first draft of what eventually became the Preamble to the Indian Constitution, and the debates around it provide important indications about the programmes and assumptions of most political groups in 1946 other than the League. The Congress, overwhelmingly disconcerted in the Assembly, included a wide range of veins, extending from Right-wing Hindu nationalist to Socialists like Minoo Masani, while important interventions were made by Dalit leaders, particularly Ambedkar, and Somnath Lahiri, Communist member of the Constituent Assembly. We therefore include copious extracts from this debate.

iii. CONGRESS

Throughout the winter of 1945–46, Congress leaders kept up a fairly militant anti-British rhetoric in connection with the INA prisoners' release issue and an election campaign that repeatedly evoked memories of 1942 heroism and repression. We have included as samples of this rhetoric the election manifesto of the Congress, and extracts from a few speeches by Patel and Govindvallabh Pant [II; (iii); 3, 7, 17]. That such rhetoric often worried high British officials is clear from a number of documents included in Mansergh [VI; 305–6, 393, 476]. Yet the gap between rhetoric and action is fairly clear, not only from the kind of evidence about the major anti-British outbursts and Congress leadership attitudes towards them, already included in Chapter I, but also in terms of the significant paucity of Intelligence Reports about objectionable Congress ground-level activities even before the party became the government in a majority of provinces. One partial exception, judging from available data, might have been parts of the United Provinces countryside [II; (iii), 4, 12, 30, 39, 40, 42, 43, 46]. But the general shift of the premier national party from mass activity towards high-level negotiations, formation of ministries, and running governments is obvious enough; so is the rapid evaporation of militant rhetoric once the elections were over by March 1946. Our documents also pinpoint the possible aggravation, as power came within reach, of two chronic problems: factional disputes, and a major lag of organization behind popular appeal. Nehru's note of 8 August to Working Committee members was extremely frank on both matters: "... the inner weakness of the Congress is more obvious today" than at any time in the last 25 years, "there is a big hiatus between its prestige and its working capacity," and "faction grows and the time of most Congressmen is spent in elections or party faction.... While there is a great deal of talk of constructive work of various kinds, precious little is done." [II; (ii); 32]. That Gandhi had become in most ways a marginal figure within Congress politics is indicated from Documents II; (ii); 9, 35 – his very language seems extremely distant. Much more material of this type could have been included, but the Mahatma's works of course are available everywhere.

iv. SOCIALISTS AND OTHER LEFT GROUPS WITHIN CONGRESS

Apart from the Communists, expelled from the Congress in November 1945 because of their opposition to the 1942 movement, other Left groups were still within the Congress, and among these the Socialists and the Forward Bloc enjoyed considerable prestige due to their preeminence in that same struggle. Here militant anti-imperialist rhetoric persisted throughout, but it was not on the whole backed up by equivalent mass action. Our documents do seem to indicate a higher level of such Left nationalist activity in the United Provinces and Central Provinces and Berar. In the latter province one can see a significant conflict developing with the Congress ministry over the speeches of Nana Patil, hero of the Satara parallel government of 1942, whom now the Congress ministry clearly considered an embarrassment. There was also a considerable Socialist presence in labour movements, as extracts particularly from the private papers of Jayaprakash Narayan will illustrate in the next chapter. A Communist preeminence is fairly obvious here, however, as a correspondent of Jayaprakash from Bangalore complains on 10 October [II; (iv); 14].

v. COMMUNISTS

The bulk of Communist activity was in labour and kisan movements, as well as to some extent in resisting communal riots after August 1946. Data about the Communist Party of India (CPI) consequently is mainly in Chapter III, and occasionally in Chapter IV. In this chapter, we have scattered indications of Party activity in areas like the United Provinces and the Central Provinces and Berar, outside its main labour and peasant bases. These documents include extracts from programmatic statements, indicative of the complexities of transition in the post-Peoples' War era

towards much greater militancy on anti-imperialist as well as class issues. Significant contrasts emerge particularly on the thorny question of Pakistan. Notice for instance the shift from P.C. Joshi's election speech in January to the August policy statement so far as references to the Muslim League are concerned [II; (iv); 3, 13]. One striking and significant fact is the way the Communists had already emerged as a kind of tacit common target of the British, the Congress, and the League. This is indicated by the prominence given to Communists in official reports during the January–February anti-British outbursts [see Chapter I]; the attack on the Party headquarters in Bombay in January on Subhas Day; repressive measures taken by Congress ministries in Madras and the Central Provinces and Berar, in the latter province even without much in the way of a Communist presence or activity, and involving the keeping of very detailed dossiers and suggestions of preventive arrests; and police raids in Calcutta in September under a League ministry in connection with the alleged leak to the press of a British army circular. The documents, in other words, occasionally presage the moods of 1948–49 from the perspectives of Communists and what would become the successor ruling parties alike.

vi. THE MAHASABHA AND HINDU COMMUNALISM

The RSS generally has shunned the publicity of written discourses. Information about RSS organization has been placed in Section (i) above. Documentation about Hindu communalism, riots apart [see Chapter IV], consequently relates mainly to the Hindu Mahasabha. What is particularly striking here till large-scale riots began in August is a coexistence of two kinds of rhetoric, for public and for more restricted circulation. Thus extracts from resolutions passed at a session of the Mahasabha Working Committee in April appear fairly bland, at times almost similar to Congress standpoints [II; (vi); 2, 4]. But two letters written a few days later by Mahasabha secretary Asutosh Lahiri to Shyamaprasad Mukherji, its president, [II; (vi); 3, 5] seem to belong to a different world: "... the situation has now greatly improved in our favour due to communal riots in UP and Punjab," while it is "a reassuring sign that there has been an acute realisation among all sections of Hindus ... to prepare for the worst ... I feel that the Hindus are only being prevented from offensive action owing to the installation of the Congress ministry in power [in the United Provinces]." This, it needs to be noted, was four months before Jinnah's Direct Action Day. After August, Mahasabha public rhetoric quickly caught up with the previously private, as the extracts from some speeches by Malaviya and Moonje and data about the Gorakhpur session of December will illustrate. Our selection also includes a curious document that we have encountered in several distinct repositories, purporting to be a "verbal circular" of the League calling for the total conversion of all Hindus and/or their extermination by a "Muslim gestapo", destruction of temples, rape of all Hindu women, etc. [II; (v); 9]. A patent forgery, but of some significance nevertheless as indicative of the high degree of Hindu communalist virulence and organization, as well as a summing-up of an enormous range of communal stereotypes. Finally, as an indication of the wide-ranging nature of Hindu communal presuppositions, extending much beyond avowed organizational affiliations, we have included extracts from two letters of the Liberal M.R. Jayakar sharply critical of Mahasabha leaders like Savarkar, but sharing identical assumptions and offering the not unintelligent advice that the Mahasabha should concentrate on working within the Congress, "forming a wing in the Congress perpetually watchful of Hindu interests ..." [II; (v); 1, 11].

vii. MUSLIM LEAGUE

Documentation about the League and its affines, except to some extent in connection with actual riots, remains a weak point of the volume. Archival material relating to the Punjab and the other regions of what became Pakistan is largely unavailable in India; while that from West Bengal has been exceptionally ill maintained. The Bengal *Home (Political) Department* series, for instance, which is so useful for earlier years is largely missing or impossible to use in 1946. We have had to

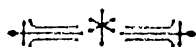
make do, therefore, with somewhat scrappy extracts from newspapers and a few CID reports, which still vividly illustrate the extreme virulence of League rhetoric in 1946.

viii. OTHER MINORITY GROUPS AND SCHEDULED CASTES

The already noted weakness of documentation from the Punjab has seriously affected also the material concerning the Sikh component of 1946 politics, which once again consists largely of newspaper extracts. With the Akalis and the League alike, it would have been possible of course to give much more information of the high-level, programmatic type by including memorials connected with the Cabinet Mission and other constitutional negotiations, but that went against the already enunciated decision to exclude from this volume material published in the Mansergh series. We have also included in this miscellaneous section a stray but interesting document on Gurkha grievances, and some information about Scheduled Castes demands and plans for agitation, the latter as a kind of curtain raiser to a later chapter on movements around caste issues.

ix. BRITISH RESPONSES

The chapter ends with a few documents relating to administrative responses to political change: specifically, the questions of continuing recruitment of British officials, and the relations between government servants and political activities. [Ed.]



2.i GENERAL

1. Assembly Elections Results 1946

Results of Assembly elections in 1946.

Indian Annual Register (1946), Vol. I, pp. 229-31.

**Votes Polled by Congress and Other Parties in
Assembly Elections (1946)**

(Tables does not include votes of uncontested seats.

Unopposed returns: Congress 303 and Muslim League 40)

Province	Congress	Muslim League	Non-League Muslims	Schedule Caste Federation	Communists
Madras	21,79,576	3,07,398	23,058	58,335	3,69,785
Bombay	38,09,469	2,51,331	25,440	2,72,061	51,620
Bihar	75,79,922	1,46,078	51,573	...	4,221
UP	13,84,650	5,22,705	2,76,935	19,255	20,589
Punjab	5,19,389	6,79,923	58,235	...	40,660
NWFP	1,55,085	1,47,880	2,08,896	...	...
CP & Berar	6,39,715	46,889	10,385	78,417	1,864
Sind	62,997	1,99,651	1,52,235	...	...
Assam	3,37,614	1,58,190	81,756	...	16,446
Orissa	66,281	4,336	554	...	2,234
Bengal	23,34,812	20,36,775	3,97,325	97,004	1,59,304
Total	1,90,69,510	45,01,156	15,86,392	5,32,072*	6,66,723

*Out of 151 seats reserved for the Scheduled Castes the Congress Scheduled Castes candidates won 36 seats unopposed and 105 seats contested with 2182 2 (thousand) votes, votes of unopposed seats not included.

NB The Congress polled more than 190 lakhs or 19 million votes.

The Muslim League polled about 45 lakhs or 4.5 million -- 75% Muslim votes.

The Non-League Parties polled more than 15 lakhs or 1.5 million -- 25% Muslim votes.

The Scheduled Castes Federation polled more than 5 lakhs or 0.5 million votes.

The Communist Party polled more than 6 lakhs or 0.6 million votes.

**As the Congress Party Stands vis-a-vis Other Parties
in the Provincial Legislative Assemblies (1946) After the Elections**

Province	Congress		NM	ML	HM	SCF
	1937	1946				
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
NWFP	196	30 ¹	2(J)	17	...	
Punjab	18	51	73	...	...
Sind	7	184(J)	27	...	...
UP	134	153 ²	7	54	...	...
Bihar	98	98 ³	...	34	...	...

(Contd.)

... (Contd.)

Province	Congress		NM	ML	HM	SCF
	1937	1946				
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Orissa	36	47	...	4	...	...
Bengal	54	86	113	1	...	...
Madras	159	165	...	29	...	...
CP & Berar	70	92	...	13	...	1
Bombay	86	125	30	1	...	...
Assam	33	583(J)	31	...	...	...

(Contd.)

Province	RDP	Com	Others		Total
(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)		
NWFP	...	...	1	(Akali)	50
Punjab	...	...	20	(Unionist)	175
			9	(Independent)	
Sind	...	...	4	(In Pro Con)	60
			4	(M. u. Syed)*	
			3	Europeans	
U P	...	...	1	Ind Pro Con Muslim	22
			13	Independents ¹	
Bihar	...	...	5	Momins (NLMP)	152
			12	Independents	
			3	Adibasis	
Orissa	...	1	4	Independents	60
			4	Non-elective	
Bengal	...	3	25	Europeans	250
			9	Non-League Muslims	
			12	Independents	
Madras	...	2	19	Independents	215
CP & Berar	...	...	6	Independents	112
Bombay	1	2	16	Independents	175
Assam	...	...	7	Independents	108
			9	Europeans	
Total	1	8	201		1585

1 Including 19 Muslim members

2 Including one Muslim seat

3 Including 4 Muslims.

4 Opposed to official Muslim League under Mr Jinnah. The group is working with the Congress in the Assembly

Abbreviations:

<i>NM</i>	-- Nationalist Muslim
<i>ML</i>	- Muslim League
<i>HM</i>	- Hindu Mahasabha
<i>SCF</i>	-- Scheduled Castes Federation
<i>RDP</i>	- Radical Democratic Party
<i>Com</i>	- Communist
<i>J</i>	-- Jamiat-UI-Ulema
<i>Ind Pro Con</i>	- Independent Pro-Congress
<i>ML-u-Syed</i>	- Muslim League under Syed
<i>NLMP</i>	- Non League Muslim Party

2. Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh

An unsigned report prepared by the Intelligence Bureau, Home Department, Government of India; 19 June 1946. File No. 5/12/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Note on Rashtriya Swayam Sewak Sangh

The Rashtriya Swayam Sewak Sangh (National Volunteer Corps) was founded in 1925 at Nagpur by Dr Keshao Hedgewar, a Maharashtra Brahmin, who was Secretary of the Hindu Mahasabha from 1926 to 1931. In 1927 the Corps was reorganised in the four Marathi speaking districts of the Central Provinces by Dr B.S. Moonje, the Hindu Mahasabha leader, to defend the Hindus during communal outbreaks. In 1932, it was accorded official recognition by the All India Hindu Mahasabha and became an all-India organisation. Dr Hedgewar died in 1940 and was succeeded by Prof. Madhav Sadashiv Golwalker of Nagpur who was Assistant Chief Organiser during the lifetime of Dr Hedgewar.

The Sangh's ostensible object is to "imbue the Hindus with a spirit of nationalism and inspire them with self-confidence so as to make them a great national force." The real purpose, however, goes further: it is the attainment of 'Hindustan for the Hindus'. To this end it seeks to unify the Hindus, imbue them with a martial spirit, impart military training and develop a strong and disciplined Hindu militia. It aims at achieving ultimately an India free from both foreign and Muslim domination. It can be stated without exaggeration that the Sangh has been working out a long-term policy of steady preparation for the attainment of its ultimate goal of Hindu supremacy. The wording of the pledge signed by members of the Sangh is of interest and runs as follows:

"I pledge this day that I will remain a member of Rashtriya Swayam Sewak Sangh throughout my life. I shall carry out unhesitatingly any order given by the Sangh. I shall go for work wherever required. Whatever secrets of the Sangh I shall come to know, I will never disclose them before any person not connected with the Sangh and even at the cost of my life. I shall be true by behaviour and conduct towards not only the Swayam Sewak Sangh but to all Hindus and will unhesitatingly serve them. In the end I swear that I shall serve Rashtriya Swayam Sewak Sangh with all my body, heart and money for in it lies the betterment of Hindus and the country."

The Sangh leaders have always stated in public that it is an independent organisation, free from party politics. At meetings of the Sangh during the 1942 Congress disturbances, speakers urged the members to keep aloof from the Congress movement and these instructions were generally observed; a notable exception was the notorious Chimur case in which the Sangh

volunteers joined Congress volunteers in stirring up the mob which brutally murdered certain magistrates and police officers. It has been suggested that the Sangh's abstention from participation in politics is due to its anxiety to avoid any controversy which the announcement of its political aims would almost certainly invite, and lead to its disintegration.

The Sangh is ostensibly an open organisation but it maintains considerable secrecy regarding its affairs. Only members are allowed to be present while training is in progress and even police officers have been refused admission to private grounds where such training was being carried out. The constitution of the Sangh does not appear to have been published, nor have the rules been made public. No publicity is given to the names of the office-bearers and the posts they hold. Typical of the air of secrecy which surrounds the organisation is the fact that no successor appears to have been announced after the death of the leaders, Dr Hedgewar, on 21 June, 1940. The leaders never speak to any outsider or to any of their own junior members regarding the internal activities or internal principles of their organisation. Its secretariat at Nagpur consists of the leader of the organisation who is the Chief Organiser and Commander-in-Chief and a number of Organisers with their subordinates. The Organisers tour all over India establishing new branches of the Sangh and advising, encouraging and controlling the existing branches. Before the promulgation of the ban on military drilling and wearing of uniform, the Sangh volunteers wore a uniform similar to that of Indian troops, consisting of a black cap, khaki shirt with shoulder straps and RSSS badges, khaki shorts and khaki stockings. Some branches had been seen wearing ammunition boots and putties. Officers frequently wear Sam Brown[e] belts. The volunteers usually carry lathis, which they are taught to use effectively. They are also taught to use swords, spears and daggers, and are given shooting practice with air guns. Courses of instructions arranged at camps included the following items:

- (a) (i) Squad Drill.
- (ii) Platoon Drill.
- (iii) Company Drill.
- (iv) Battalion Drill.
- (v) Sentry duties.
- (vi) Guard mounting.
- (vii) Musketry with air guns.
- (viii) Sham fights and other manoeuvre.
- (ix) Physical training.
- (x) Weapon training; use of lathis, daggers, spears and swords.
- (b) (1) Band Section.
- (2) Special Police Section.
- (3) Medical Corps—consisting of private medical practitioners.
- (c) Mental training, consisting of lectures on the aims and objects of the Sangh on Hindu Sanghatan and protection of Hindu rights.

While making a show of compliance with the restrictive orders of 1940 and 1944 the Sangh leaders have always endeavoured to find ways and means of evading them in fact and, to a lesser extent, of defying them. To avoid conflict with the authorities, greater secrecy has of late been observed and various devices such as 'picnics', meeting at odd hours and admitting police officials on passes, have been employed to avoid police attention. In certain towns in the CP, camps were reported to have been organised by the Sangh in March and April, 1945, in contravention of the Camps and Parades (Control) Order, 1944 and the organisers were

proceeded against under DIR [Defence of India Rules] 58 (1) and (2). In May 1945 Officers' Training Camps on an elaborate scale were held at Bilaspur and Nagpur. The latter was organised without the permission of the District Magistrate, but precautions were taken to avoid offending against the Camps and Parades (Control) Order. Cases of Government servants participating in the Sangh's activities have been reported. Members of the Sangh appear to have been instructed to mix freely with Government servants to induce them to become members and to extract official information from them.

In the NWFP regular parades are reported to have been held in the latter half of 1945 and at a camp held in Peshawar late in the year permission was refused to the police to enter the camp and a volunteer armed with a revolver stood at the entrance to the camp.

During the latter half of 1945, drilling in military formation by the Sangh volunteers was reported from Darbhanga and Monghyr in Bihar.

According to Punjab reports, Apte and Dadarao Parmarth, who toured the Punjab early in 1945, were reported to have suggested to the local organisers that the Punjab Sangh HQ should be shifted to the nearby Hindu State at Jammu, so that the Sangh activities could be carried out with greater freedom. In this province pro-Sangh propaganda is reported to be carried on under cover of 'Kirtans' in which government servants participate. Dharam Vir, the Punjab 'Sangh-Chalak' has secretly instructed the Branches to increase the number of Sikh members in the Sangh and has advised the formation of Mohalla Defence Committees.

The membership during 1945 showed a decrease of about 5000 compared with the previous year. The following are the comparative figures for the whole of India and the provinces of Bombay, UP, Sind, Punjab, CP, Bihar and Madras, which are the strongholds of the movement:

	1941	Dec. 1942	Dec. 1943	Dec. 1944	Dec. 1945
All-India Total	37,362	64,048	81,033	88,265	83,189
Bombay	12,712	18,092	24,395	21,261	18,240
UP	900	1,000	5,048	6,870	7,267
Sind	300	850	1,650	2,945	4,360
Punjab	1,530	10,000	14,000	14,000	14,000
CP	20,390	32,090	33,344	34,010	30,074
Bihar	40	310	310	3,493	3,288
Madras	210	381	835	4,205	3,965

Of late, Golwalkar and other spokesmen of the Sangh are becoming more outspoken regarding the real aims of the Sangh. A Nagpur, addressing 5000 members who took part in the arms worship ceremony during the "Duserah" celebrations (1945), Golwalkar said that the Sangh was formed for the realisation of the Indian Independence, which meant Hindu rule and the protection of Hinduism and Hindu rights. When inaugurating the Camp at Wardha in the latter half of 1945 Motiram Vinayak Jayakar, a Bombay solicitor while criticising the Pakistan scheme declaring that India was heading towards a civil war in which the Sangh would play a vital part. Instructions were reported to have been recently sent out from Nagpur enjoining upon Sangh volunteers to take part in any communal riots, which may break out and to carry *dandas* 2½ft long for defensive purposes.

Golwalkar, addressing some 800 officers of the Sangh in Hoshangabad Dist on 17/18th March 1946, is reported to have declared that India was passing through a transitional period and that the chaotic conditions like communal riots, murders and dacoities which would precede

the seizure of political power and against which the Sangh had been preparing would arise in a year or so. He added that the present strength of the Sangh which, he claimed, was roughly 2½ lakhs, was sufficient to meet this development and that his plan of direct action was held in readiness for disclosure at the psychological moment.

In a secret meeting held at Rohtak on 19-5-46, Dada Bhai of Nagpur is reported have said that the Sangh's struggle was not against the British but against the Muslims and that every Hindu should be ready to take part in this struggle when the time comes. This is said to have stimulated enlistment in Rohtak.

Annual camps of the Sangh were held in May last in various provinces. An Officers Training Camp at Akola (CP) was attended by 450 members. Picquets [*sid*] were posted in the camp at night. The annual camp of the Karnatak Rashtriya Swayam Sewak Sangh opened on May 1st and was attended by about 900 volunteers. Training in physical exercises and parades was imparted. Similar camps were held in Benares, Gaya, Ahmedabad and some places in Thana district in the Bombay province. In the Benares camp which attracted 7000 trainees, the principal subjects of instruction were physical exercises with *lathis*, and lectures on Hindu heroes. According to a Delhi CID report, a rally held in Delhi was attended by about 1000 volunteers. Members of the Sangh are reported to do physical training and *lathi-fighting* practice at various places in Delhi. "Bayonet practice with lathis with sharpened ends" is reported to have been practised at Montgomery. According to another Punjab report four Sangh volunteers were arrested in Banga (Jullundur) for having arms in their possession. The Peshawar branch of the Sangh is reported to be making arrangements to procure spears for their members.

Sangh volunteers are alleged to have been responsible for the murder of a Muslim youth in Amritsar in April last and to be involved in the recent communal riots in Delhi and Bareilly. (According to the CC, Delhi, however, participation by the Sangh members in the Delhi riot was not permitted.) The police had to intervene at Hansi (Hissar) on 17-5-46 in order to prevent trouble between the RSSS volunteers and local Muslims.

According to a recent Nagpur report the sympathy of the Rashtriya Swayam Sewak Sangh is drifting from the Hindu Mahasabha towards the Congress, and it is alleged that the organisation intends to be well to the fore if another Congress struggle becomes necessary.

It has been reported that the Sangh intends to carry out propaganda in all villages throughout India; as a part of this scheme about 10 village branches have been very recently organised in less than a month in the Aligarh area. This was undoubtedly a reaction to the recent Aligarh riots.

From the above it will be seen that the Rashtriya Swayam Sewak Sangh is well organised and has a large membership and it has already shown that it is a potential danger to communal peace as is evidenced by participation by its members in recent riots in the UP and Delhi.

Dated 19-6-1946.

3. Volunteer Organisations and Private Armies

Extracts from a Home Department, Government of India, report by E.J. Beveridge, 9 December 1946. File No. 28/5/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Volunteer Organisations in India

At Appendix A will be found the estimated distribution in Provinces of the strength, as reported in mid-1946, of the twelve most important volunteer organisations in India. Appendix B deals

individually with the estimated membership of each of these organisations in the years 1941 to 1946. These figures despite their unreliability afford a broad indication of the extent of the problem presented by India's "private armies". The figures are unreliable, partly because of the difficulty of assessing over so wide a field a membership, which the organisations themselves find difficult to assess or which they blatantly exaggerate and partly because the membership rapidly rises or falls with the tide of any particular agitation and [adds?] to the confusion of any attempt at accuracy. In Appendix C are brief outlines of the origin, object and development of each of the twelve organisations.

By 1938 it was becoming apparent that the volunteer movement in India was gaining both in point of members and in intensity, even though organisation and control were lacking in full efficiency. With the outbreak of war in September, 1939, the pace began further to quicken and in the first half of 1940 there was hitherto unparalleled activity throughout the country. This was primarily due to the panic caused by unfavourable developments in the war situation in Europe which gave rise to a feverish anxiety on the part of the great communities and political parties to establish strong and disciplined volunteer forces for use in an emergency. At the same time, increasing communal mistrust, combined with a general apprehension of internal disorder or external aggression gave a strong impetus to volunteer activity in several Provinces.

The rapid increase in the number and strength of volunteer organisations, and the serious threat they constituted to the maintenance of public order and the security of the country in time or war, led the Government of India, acting in consultation with all Provincial Governments, to issue in August 1940 general orders under the Defence of India Rules, prohibiting unlawful drilling with or without arms and the wearing of unofficial uniforms bearing a colourable resemblance to military or other official uniforms. These orders had an immediate and marked effect. The ban on drill and uniforms, by curtailing opportunities for display, removed one of the chief attractions to youths offered by the volunteer organisations and resulted in a general loss of keenness by members. Lack of funds and the restriction of the activities of many of the leaders also contributed to the general decline in enthusiasm reported by most Provinces by the middle of 1941. During the next three years, the only important all-India volunteer organisation to make steady progress was the Rashtriya Swayam Sewak Sangh, which largely succeeded in evading the control orders of 1940, by conducting training classes and camps in private behind an outward seeming of compliance with the law.

In 1944, the activities of the RSSS and attempts to reorganise the Muslim Guards led the Government of India to consider the problem afresh in consultation with Provincial Governments. As a result, the Defence of India Rules were amended in September, 1944, and a new order, entitled the "Camps and Parades (Control) Order, 1944", was issued, providing further powers for the control of parades and camps. This new order had the desired effect and the activities of most volunteer organisations declined during 1945, with a corresponding reduction in membership. During 1946, however, far-reaching political developments and a consequential deterioration in the general communal situation in the country have again led to a marked revival in volunteer activities. The memberships of such major communal volunteer organisations as the Rashtriya Swayam Sewak Sangh, the Muslim League National Guards and the Shiromani Akali Dal, have all registered substantial increases.

On September 30th, 1946, the Defence of India Rules expired, together with the control orders of 1940 and 1944. The disappearance of these orders has given a marked fillip to the volunteer movement and has led to an immediate revival of the wearing of uniforms, the carrying of weapons and the performance of drill in public. The effect of the expiry of the

control orders would have been even more marked had it not been for the local restrictive orders under Section 144 CrPC in force at a number of places as a result of communal disorders or tension. Provincial and local authorities in many parts of the country have expressed apprehension at this revival of volunteer activities. The growth of communal tension has given special impetus to the more communal organisations, which by their resumption of public parades and demonstrations, have added to communal anger, fear or suspicion. Thus a vicious circle has been created. At present the more importance of the communal organisations are in the stage of reorganisation and of building up their strength. The point of open clashes between opposing organisations or parties of volunteers has fortunately not yet been reached; but it remains a dangerous and a likely possibility if the situation is permitted to drift out of control. The reimposition of some form of control over the various volunteer organisations would appear therefore to be an urgent necessity. In Bihar, this has already been recognised by the Provincial Government and an ordinance was issued on November 13th, prohibiting the performance of drill of a military nature and the wearing of any dress resembling a uniform worn by a member of an official Police force. Similarly, in the Punjab an ordinance for the maintenance of public safety has been promulgated, which *inter alia* places severe restrictions on the more objectionable volunteer activities. The enforcement of this ordinance, notably at Lahore, is reported to have already seriously curtailed the training of RSSS volunteers.

Owing largely to the rapid pace of developments in recent months, accurate up-to-date figures of membership of the various volunteer organisations are not available; but an approximate estimate of the position at the end of the first half of 1946 shows that the all-India membership of the more important volunteer organisations in the country was, in round figures:

(1) Rashtriya Swayam Sewak Sangh	1,00,500
(2) Muslim League National Guards	91,500
(3) Akalis	90,000
(4) Khaksars	12,500
(5) Congress Volunteer Organisations	58,000
(6) Red Shirts	12,500
(7) Azad Hind Dal	8,500
(8) Mahabir Dal	17,000
(9) Hindu Mahasabha Volunteers	13,000
(10) Sainik Dal	5,500
(11) Ahrars	3,000
(12) Hindustan Red Army	1,000
Total	4,13,000

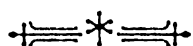
This is in addition a large number of smaller organisations, including miscellaneous Hindu volunteer bodies, such as the Arya Dal and Lok Sena Dal, with a total membership of approximately 8000 and several Muslim organisations, such as Jamiat-ul-Ulema-i-Hind and the Azad Muslim Razakars, mustering a total membership of some 1500, together with other organisations of minor or local importance. Brief notes on the more important volunteer organisations are given in Appendix C. In the case of Khaksars, their previous history has been given in somewhat more detail than in other cases, as this organisation furnishes a particularly good example of the dangerous possibilities of a disciplined volunteer organisation determined to defy the authorities and the measures by which it was eventually brought under control.

APPENDIX A
Distribution of Major Volunteer Organisations (mid-1946)
in Provinces

Province	RSS Sangh	Muslim League	Akalis	Khaksars	Congress Volunteer Organisations	Red Shirts
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Bengal	100	3,500	—	100	—	—
Bihar	3,428	2,235	—	576	—	—
Bombay	19,477	7,480	—	131	29,952	—
CP	30,074	2,969	—	412	939	—
Delhi	2,500	500	—	53	—	—
Madras	7,103	14,244	—	314	—	—
NWFP	595	11,108	—	1,168	—	12,751
Punjab	22,000	10,000	90,000	600	—	—
Sind	4,900	3,500	150	375	918	—
UP	10,225	36,062	—	8,767	26,011	—
Total	1,00,402	91,538	90,150	12,496	57,820	12,751

APPENDIX A (Contd.)

Province	Azad Hind Dal	Mahabir Dal	Hindu Mahasabha Volunteer Organisations	Sainik Dal	Ahrars	Hindustan Red Army	Total
(1)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)
Bengal	3,372	—	—	—	—	—	7,072
Bihar	2,715	—	141	—	—	—	9,095
Bombay	—	—	—	1,065	507	—	58,612
CP	2,151	—	275	4,500	—	—	42,260
Delhi	200	80	—	—	200	—	3,533
Madras	—	—	6,150	—	—	—	27,811
NWFP	—	215	—	—	215	—	26,052
Punjab	—	15,000	—	—	610	—	1,38,200
Sind	—	—	—	—	—	—	9,843
UP	—	1,623	6,554	—	1,623	—	90,865
Total	8,438	16,918	13,120	5,565	3,145	1,000	4,13,343



APPENDIX B-1 Rashtriya Swayam Sewak Sangh

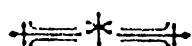
Province	1941	1942		1943	
		June	Dec.	June	Dec.
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Bombay	12,712	14,646	18,092	20,476	24,395
UP	*900	900	1,000	3,985	5,048
Sind	300	850	*850	*850	1,650
Punjab	1,530	10,000	10,000	14,000	14,000
CP	20,390	25,059	32,090	33,344	*33,344
NWFP	*300	*300	*300	*300	*300
Delhi	*900	900	1,000	1,500	1,101
Bengal (Calcutta)	80	70	25	25	50
Bihar	40	350	310	*310	*310
Madras (Figs are rough)	210	331	381	835	*835
Total	37,362	53,406	64,048	75,625	81,033

* Presumptive figure

APPENDIX B-1 (Contd.)

Province	1944		1945		1946
	June	Dec.	June	Dec.	June
(1)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)
Bombay	23,472	21,261	18,295	18,240	19,477
UP	5,756	6,870	7,007	7,267	10,225
Sind	2,150	2,975	4,245	*4,245	4,900
Punjab	14,000	14,000	14,000	14,000	22,000
CP	34,010	*34,010	32,475	30,074	30,074
NWFP	*300	300	500	595	595
Delhi	1,101	1,101	1,101	1,300	2,500
Bengal (Calcutta)	50	50	50	100	100
Bihar	3,484	3,493	435	3,288	3,428
Madras (Figs are rough)	3,915	4,205	*4,205	3,965	7,103
Total	88,238	88,265	82,313	79,174	1,00,402

* Presumptive figure



APPENDIX B-2

Muslim League Volunteer Corps or Muslim National Guard

Province	1941	1942		1943	
		June	Dec.	June	Dec.
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Madras (Figs are rough)	1,593	443	1,674	1,681	5,686
UP	16,035	17,527	17,735	25,621	27,547
Punjab	*500	500	*300	*200	182
Delhi	*300	*300	*300	350	100
Sind	140	46	*100	*100	190
NWFP	3,278	2,442	3,408	2,938	4,550
Bombay	2,556	3,209	2,179	2,305	4,045
Bengal	400	400	400	400	400
CP	*4,000	4,239	3,068	3,313	*3,313
Bihar	8,082	7,682	7,749	6,749	6,949
Total	36,883	36,788	36,913	43,657	52,962

* Presumptive figure.

APPENDIX B-2 (Contd.)

Province	1944		1945		1946
	June	Dec.	About June	About Dec.	June
(1)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)
Madras (Figs are rough)	1,868	1,668	7,668	9,656	14,244
UP	25,993	9,312	8,206	32,290	36,062
Punjab	*282	400	530	1,500	10,000
Delhi	350	350	300	300	500
Sind	172	232	402	*402	3,500
NWFP	5,706	4,569	4,613	11,108	11,108
Bombay	3,840	4,308	2,412	2,155	7,480
Bengal	1,567	1,817	880	1,030	3,500
CP	*3,313	*3,313	*3,313	2,712	2,909
Bihar	6,979	885	*885	1,035	2,235
Total	50,070	26,854	29,339	62,188	91,538

* Presumptive figure.

APPENDIX B-3

Akali Sena or Akali Dal or Shiromani Akali Dal

Province	1941	1942		1943	
		June	Dec.	June	Dec.
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Sind	*200	250	*500	*900	1,000
Punjab	8,000	89,000	45,000	40,000	40,000
Total	8,200	89,250	45,500	40,900	41,000

* Presumptive figure.

APPENDIX B-3 (Contd.)

Province	1944		1945		1946
	June	Dec.	June	Dec.	June
(1)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)
Sind	150	150	150	*150	150
Punjab	40,000	50,000	80,000	80,000	90,000
Total	40,150	50,150	80,150	80,150	90,150

* Presumptive figure

**APPENDIX B-4
Khaksars**

Province	1941	1942		1943	
		June	Dec.	June	Dec.
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Bombay	*1,000	*1,000	*1,000	1,364	1,475
Bengal	200	200	150	160	180
Bihar	1,132	196	196	196	196
CP	*1,000	*1,000	*1,000	*1,000	*1,000
Delhi	*50	*50	*50	70	70
Madras	392	*392	*392	*392	*392
NWFP	1,604	1,286	1,153	1,107	1,101
Punjab	*2,000	*2,500	*3,000	4,000	1,200
Sind	*500	567	*700	750	470
UP	13,462	13,147	13,563	14,218	13,789
Total	21,340	20,338	21,204	23,257	19,873

Presumptive figure.

APPENDIX B-4 (Contd.)

Province	1944		1945		1946
	June	Dec.	June	Dec.	June
(1)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)
Bombay	1,175	557	394	407	131
Bengal	150	125	100	100	100
Bihar	196	196	*196	396	576
CP	1,069	*900	813	1,050	412
Delhi	70	70	70	70	53
Madras	*392	*392	392	314	314
NWFP	1,114	1,065	1,029	1,168	1,168
Punjab	1,200	1,000	800	700	600
Sind	362	762	687	*687	375
UP	13,791	13,309	13,156	12,774	8,767
Total	19,519	18,376	17,697	17,666	12,496

* Presumptive figure

APPENDIX B-5 Congress Volunteer Organisations (Excluding Red Shirts)

Province	1941	1942		1943	
		June	Dec.	June	Dec.
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Bengal	236	86	*86	*86	*86
Bihar	1,345	1,745	877	877	877
Bombay	1,310	3,187	2,896	4,531	6,012
CP	*1,345	5,584	*5,584	*5,584	*5,584
Madras	1,345	*1,345	*1,345	*1,345	*1,345
NWFP	-	84	*84	*84	*84
Punjab	-	1,000	*1,000	*1,000	*1,000
UP	53,795	50,356	50,221	49,238	43,076
Total	59,376	64,187	62,093	62,745	58,064

* Presumptive figure.

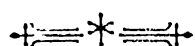
APPENDIX B-5 (Contd.)

Province	1944		1945		1946
	June	Dec.	June	Dec.	June
(1)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)
Bengal	*86	*86	*86	?	?
Bihar	*877	*822	*822	822	?
Bombay	12,548	14,034	21,372	27,981	29,952
CP	*5,584	*5,584	270	800	939
Madras	*1,345	*1,345	*1,345	?	?
NWFP	*84	*84	*84	?	?
Punjab	*1,000	*1,000	*1,000	?	?
UP	43,032	42,348	*40,931	36,023	26,011
Total	64,556	66,103	65,910	65,626	56,902

* Presumptive figure.

APPENDIX B-6 Red Shirts or Khudai Khidmatgars

Province	1941	1942	1943	1944		1945	
	June	June	Dec.	June	Dec.	June	Dec.
NWFP	11,150	11,747	8,120	9,723	9,495	12,893	12,751



APPENDIX B-7

Azad Hind Dal (and Allied Organisations of the Forward Bloc)

Province	1946 June
Bengal	3,372
Bihar	2,715
CP & Berar	2,151
Delhi	200
Total	8,438

APPENDIX B-8

Mahabir Dal

Province	1941	1942	1943
		June	June
		Dec.	Dec.
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
UP	*1,000	*1,000	*2,000
NWFP	216	155	150
Punjab	1,000	19,400	21,000
Total	2,216	20,555	23,150

* Presumptive figure

APPENDIX B-8 (Contd.)

Province	1944	1945	1946
	June	June	June
	Dec.	Dec.	Dec.
(1)	(7)	(8)	(9)
UP	2,226	1,748	1,623
NWFP	270	202	215
Punjab	15,000	15,000	15,000
Delhi			80
Total	17,496	17,000	16,918

* Presumptive figure

APPENDIX B-9 (Contd.)

Hindu Mahasabha Volunteer Organisations

Province	1941	1942	1943
		June	June
		Dec.	Dec.
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Bombay**	40	40	—
Bihar	2,716	2,570	*3,000
Bengal	30	50	*50

(Contd.) ...

... (Contd.)

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Punjab**	779	—	—	—	—
UP	1,335	*2,000	*4,000	6,135	6,523
CP	779	579	330	200	*200
Madras	261	240	221	*221	*221
Total	5,940	5,479	8,452	9,606	8,994

* Presumptive figure.

** Has apparently ceased to function.

APPENDIX B-9 (Contd.)

Province	1944		1945	
	June	Dec.	June	Dec.
(1)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)
Bombay**	—	—	—	—
Bihar	*1,000	341	*341	141
Bengal	*50	*50	*50	—
Punjab**	—	—	—	—
UP	6,586	6,431	6,493	6,554
CP	*200	*200	*200	275
Madras	*221	*221	*221	6,150
Total	8,057	7,243	7,305	13,120

* Presumptive figure

** Has apparently ceased to function.

APPENDIX B-10**Independent Labour Party Volunteer Corps or Samata Sainik Dal**

Province	1943		1944	
	June	Dec.	June	Dec.
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Bombay	*10	*15	15	365
CP	1,227	1,500	1,620	*1,620
Total	1,237	1,515	1,635	1,985

Presumptive figure.

APPENDIX B-10 (Contd.)

Province	1945		1946
	June	Dec.	June
(1)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Bombay	350	455	1,065
CP	*1,620	3,395	4,500
Total	1,970	3,850	5,565

* Presumptive figure

**APPENDIX B-11
Majlis-e-Ahrar**

Province	1941	1942		1943	
		June	Dec.	June	Dec.
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
UP	*2,063	2,188	2,211	2,230	2,260
NWFP	313	312	296	285	150
Punjab	*500	*500	*600	625	500
Delhi	*100	*100	*100	*150	*150
Bombay Province	450	445	355	410	257
Total	3,426	3,545	3,562	3,700	3,317

* Presumptive figure

APPENDIX B-11 (Contd.)

Province	1944		1945		1946
	June	Dec.	June	Dec.	June
(1)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)
UP	2,173	1,932	1,788	1,746	1,623
NWFP	159	142	185	204	215
Punjab	500	500	400	700	600
Delhi	150	91	91	180	200
Bombay Province	257	507	460	60	507
Total	3,239	3,172	2,924	2,895	3,145

**APPENDIX B-12
Hindustan Red Army**

Province	1939	1940	1941	1942	1943	1944	1945	1946
CP	250	750	297	664	-	-	-	*1,000

* Presumptive figure

APPENDIX C

[We have excluded the note on Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh from Appendix C, as a more comprehensive document on the Sangh has already been presented: See Document II(i);2.]

Muslim League National Guards

The present designation of the Muslim League volunteer corps came into being in September, 1937, at the Lucknow session of the All India Muslim League. The ostensible object of the organisation was then said to be to band the Muslims together under firm discipline to carry out economic, social and political schemes for the betterment of the community and the country. The real object was, however, made clear by a subcommittee of the League in June, 1939, which called for an organised and trained body of men for the protection of Muslim lives, property and honour, and for the defence of their rights against militant Hinduism in every part of India. In June 1940, a constitution for the Guards was drawn up and was adopted by the League Council of Action in May 1944. Mr (then Nawab) Siddiq Ali Khan was appointed Salar-i-Ala (Commander-in-Chief) of the organisation. In June 1944, however, the attention of the League was drawn to the Government Orders of 1940 prohibiting parades of a military nature, etc., and it was subsequently admitted by Mr Siddiq Ali Khan that these orders proved detrimental to the growth and expansion of the Guards. The all-India membership of the organisation, which had risen from 36,883 in 1941 to 52,962 in 1943 began to decline and by June 1945 was down to 29,339. Thereafter, membership began to increase again and by the end of 1945 was 62,188. In December 1945 Mr Siddiq Ali Khan stated that arrangements were under contemplation for giving the guards military training to enable them to come out and serve Muslim interests. In spite of the increase of membership during 1945, there was little organisation or activity until April 1946, when Major Khurshid Anwar was appointed Chief Organiser of the Guards and at the same time Mr Jinnah called upon all provinces to organise and expand their Guards. Major Anwar toured several provinces and met with a good response in the Punjab, the NWFP, the UP, and to a lesser extent in Sind. In Bengal, party factions hampered the development of the organisation in the early part of the year but a recent report states that the membership in Calcutta stands at 4000, although many members are inactive. A report from Calcutta in July 1946 mentioned that plans were under way for capturing the Muslim section of the Bengal Home Guards— including those disbanded—and amalgamating them with the Muslim National Guards, thereby making it a militant organisation. The reorganisation of the Guards was considered by the League Committee of Action on 10-9-1946 and it was disclosed that slow progress had been made, although by June 1946 the all-India membership was reported to be 91,538. On 17-9-1946, Major Khurshid Anwar was appointed Deputy Commander-in-Chief of the Guards and given independent charge of the Provinces of Sind, the Punjab, the NWFP, Bengal and Assam. Since then he has continued to devote himself actively to the work of reorganisation. While in the Punjab, he declared that Pakistan could not be achieved without bloody revolution and he therefore believed in mass terrorism. The recruitment and training of Guards is proceeding vigorously in the Muslim majority provinces and also in the UP with effect from 1-10-1946 a new constitution for the Guards has been framed and enforced by the Committee of Action of the All India Muslim League. The new constitution places control of the organisation with the Centre instead of which the Provincial Muslim League bodies and its eventual control, in the event of Direct Action, with the League Committee of Action. Under the new constitution the Guards have been given a new organisation on military lines with officers and other ranks and a uniform of

military pattern with badges of rank has been prescribed, which every Guard is required to provide for himself. During November, 1946, Major Khurshid Anwar visited Bengal and Assam on a tour of inspection. In Calcutta, he expressed dissatisfaction at the slow progress of the Guards in Calcutta and other parts of Bengal and demanded that at least 2,00,000 Guards should be enlisted in Calcutta and above five *lakhs* in the whole of Bengal. He said these volunteers should be well trained in first aid and parade and should be prepared to make all possible sacrifices for the achievement of Pakistan and the protection of the Muslims in Bengal and in the Muslim minority provinces. He asserted that Congress and its allied Hindu organisations were determined to crush the Muslims and were already preparing for a civil war. He said the Muslims were not yet prepared but they would have to organise themselves as soon as possible, as otherwise they would be treated everywhere like the Muslims of Bihar.

Shiromani Akali Dal

The Shiromani Akali Dal, or Akali Sena, exists in the Punjab, Sind, the NWFP and Delhi; but the total membership outside the Punjab forms only a minute proportion of the whole. In Punjab its strength fell from 89,000 in mid-1942 to 40,000 in mid-1943, rose to 80,000 again by mid-1945 and in mid-1946 was 90,000. Strictly speaking it is a political party and not a volunteer organisation. Nevertheless, the Dal contains a very large number of active members who drill and wear uniforms consisting of black turbans, shorts and shirts with a *kirpan* slung from the shoulder. These could be used as a Sikh Volunteer Corps in the event of civil commotion in the provinces in which it is active, or in the event of any serious agitation affecting Sikh interests. An example of this was afforded early in 1946, when thousands of volunteers responded to the Dal's call in connexion with the threatened *morcha* against the Cabinet Delegation's plan for constitutional changes. Following the Sikh decision to enter the Interim Government and participate in the Constituent Assembly, preparations for a *morcha* have been abandoned and the Dal is at present preoccupied with the Gurdwara elections. Its powerful influence among the Sikhs arises from its control of the *Gurdwaras* which it exercises through the medium of the Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee. Although the Punjab Sikh leaders have shown signs of standing aloof from the present Hindu-Muslim communal dispute and although the Dal is quiet at present, the organisation is a potentially dangerous one.

Khaksars

The Anjuman-in-Khaksaran was founded in 1931 by M. Inayatullah Khan Mashriqi, a retired member of the IES. Its ostensible objects were to organise the Muslims for social service, to obtain *Swaraj* by quicker methods than those of Congress and by promoting unity to become the dominating political power in the country. Although theoretically open to all communities, in practice there have been very few non-Muslim Khaksars and a 1940 report estimated that they had never exceeded 50 in number. The secret object of the organisation is to provide Mashriqi with a large disciplined pan-Islamic body ready to undertake at a moment's notice any activity ordered by him, and interest in the organisation has been kept alive by the announcement from time to time by Mashriqi of grandiloquent schemes for the advancement of Muslim interests. Although originally controlled, in theory, by an Executive Committee of five, headed by Mashriqi, in practice Mashriqi has enjoyed supreme and dictatorial control of the organisation under the title of *Amir*. The Khaksars are organised on military lines with officers (*Salars*) of various grades and other ranks known as *Pakbazes*, *Janbazes* and *Khaksars*. *Janbazes*, who are in the charge of *Pakbazes*, are special volunteers who have to sign a pledge in

their own blood to place their "life, wealth and everything else" at the disposal of the Khaksar Central Institution. Women Khaksars first appeared in 1937. The funds of the organisation are under the personal control of Mashriqi, who has always played a large part in financing the Khaksars. No subscriptions are paid, but each Khaksar must provide his own uniform and *belcha*. A special feature of the organisation in its early days was the issue of "Pay" to *Salars* ranging from Rs 50 to Rs 15 per month in the form of promissory notes containing Persian inscription capable of the double interpretation:

"I promise to pay the bearer the above-mentioned on the attainment of independence
Rupees _____ with certainty."

Before restrictions were imposed, and to some extent since, Khaksar training has included parades, inspections, drill, military tactics, the holding of training camps and "Mock Wars". The latter, a special feature of Khaksar training, were carried out with considerable realism and much attention to detail. Crackers were used to represent bombs; field hospitals were established for the wounded; and at the conclusion of hostilities a ceremony was held to commemorate the dead. These mock ceremonies were later repeated in grim reality, when the Khaksars came into conflict with the authorities. A special feature of the organisation has always been the very strict discipline maintained and from the year 1937 flogging in public has been enforced as the usual punishment for breaches of orders. The Khaksars first fell foul of the authorities in 1939 when Mashriqi attempted to intervene in the Madhe-Sahaba dispute at Lucknow. Khaksars poured into the United Provinces from the Punjab and the NWFP, and attacked police parties with sharpened *belchas* as weapons. The police were forced to open fire and casualties were suffered on both sides. After 1000 Khaksars had been arrested, the trouble eventually subsided but the following year (1940) fresh trouble broke out in the Punjab. Mashriqi took exception to orders passed by the Provincial Government under the Defence of India Rules, restricting drill of a military nature and the carrying of arms or weapons, and this culminated in a bloody clash with the police at Lahore on 19-3-1940 in which a Superintendent of Police was very seriously injured, a Deputy Superintendent of Police was mortally injured and a number of other ranks killed and injured. The Khaksars themselves suffered 31 killed and 63 injured. The Anjuman-i-Khaksaran was declared an unlawful association in the Punjab and Delhi, and Mashriqi was arrested. Following further clashes with the Police later in the year and the promulgation by the Government of India, in August 1940, of orders under the Defence of India Rules prohibiting unlawful drilling with or without arms, a settlement was reached and the Punjab Government's notification was withdrawn. Mashriqi remained in jail, however, and in 1941 Khaksar attempts to revive their anti-Government activities led to a fresh declaration of the Anjuman as unlawful association by all Provincial Governments, at the request of the Government of India, on 6-6-1941. For a time the movement was effectively suppressed. In January 1942, following negotiations with the Government of India, Mashriqi was released from jail and restricted to Madras Province, where he conducted further negotiations with the object of securing the raising of the ban on the organisation. This he finally succeeded in achieving after he had issued, on 28-12-42, instructions prohibiting, for the duration of the war, any drilling, carrying of implements, or wearing of uniforms or badges by Khaksars and restricting them to individual social service. Mashriqi was permitted to return to the Punjab, but it soon became apparent, in 1943, that he did not intend to keep strictly to his undertakings on behalf of the Khaksars. He had to be repeatedly warned by the Government of India during 1943 until, after a final warning in November 1943, Khaksar activities were

effectively brought under control and Khaksar influence began to decline. One factor which assisted in this decline was the development of hostility between the Khaksars and the Muslim League aggravated by the attempt on Mr Jinnah's life by a Khaksar at Bombay on 26-7-1943, by the middle of 1944, the all-India strength of the organisation had fallen to 19,519, as compared with 23,257 a year earlier. The issue by the Government of India of further orders under the Defence of India Rules, prohibiting, restricting or imposing conditions on, the holding of camps, parades, meetings or assemblies, accelerated this decline, by mid-1945 the all-India strength was down to 17,697 and by mid-1946 to 12,496. Important contributory factors to this serious loss of Khaksar influence have been Mashriqi's continued hostility towards the Muslim League and his utter unreliability. Another factor has been the strong growth of communal feelings in recent months as a result of the communal riots in Bengal, Bihar and elsewhere. In the early stages of these disturbances Khaksars were instructed to intervene and prevent, or terminate strife between the two communities. At first, attempts were made to carry out these orders in some instances; but communal feelings soon began to develop among the Khaksars and in August and September a number of Khaksars, including some leaders, in different provinces resigned and joined the Muslim League. On October 25th and 26th a secret meeting of 22 leading Khaksars from different districts in the UP decided at Aligarh that Mashriqi was unfit for leadership and should be replaced by Mian Ahmed Shah of Karachi. The sponsors of this meeting were believed to be pro-Muslim League. Nevertheless, Mashriqi still appears to be in charge of the organisation and has recently declared his intention of holding an "All-India Marching Day" in the near future. It is not yet clear what the exact purpose of this Marching Day is intended to be, but there has been a noticeable revival of Khaksar activity, following the expiration of the restrictive orders, of 1940 and 1944, with the Defence of India Rules on 30-9-1946. Marching in uniform and the carrying of *belchas* has been resumed and a training camp has been held, in November, at Peshawar in the NWFP. Recent Punjab reports have expressed the opinion that the Khaksars are endeavouring to stage a "comeback" and that Mashriqi is persevering in his attempts to stir up anti-Police feelings among his followers. Despite the reduction in their number, the Khaksars still constitute a serious potential danger. Experience has shown that they will take advantage of any weakness in dealing with them and that they can be curbed only by the very firmest methods and by applying with the utmost rigour the extreme penalties which the law allows.

Congress Volunteer Organisations

- (a) (1) Congress Volunteer Corps.
- (2) Rashtra Seva Dal.
- (3) Azad Hind Volunteer Corps or Hindustani Sewa Dal.

At the time of the August 1942 movement the all-India strength of Congress Volunteer Organisations was estimated at 64,187. The principal strongholds were the United Provinces, where the Congress Volunteer Corps, the Rashtra Seva Dal and several allied volunteer corps produced a total membership of 50,356; the Central Provinces where the Rashtra Seva Dal and the Rashtriya Yuwak Sang had a total membership of 5584; Bombay with a Rashtra Seva Dal membership of 3187 and Bihar with a Congress Volunteer Corps membership of 1745. Following the imposition of the ban on the Congress organisations on 9-8-1942, there was a marked decline in the number of Congress volunteers in most provinces, with the exception of Bombay, where by the end of 1945 the membership of the Rashtra Seva Dal had increased

to 27,981. The decrease in membership was particularly noticeable in the United Provinces, where the total number of Congress volunteers had declined to 36,023 by the end of 1945. The *Rashtra Seva Dal* participated in the sabotage programme of the "*Patri Sarkar*" in Satara district in 1942-43 and steadily increased its membership and influence in Bombay Province, in spite of the ban, by the middle of 1946 there were 274 branches of the *Dal* in the Province with a total membership of 28,452. Branches also exist in the Central Provinces, the United Provinces and Sind. Members of the *Dal* are trained in sword drill, lathi and physical exercises and Indian games, and parades are held in private grounds to avoid police attention. At the end of 1945 the idea of a Congress Volunteer Corps, modelled on the Indian National Army, was conceived by the President of the Allahabad City Congress Committee. On November 6th, 1945, he announced his intention of forming an "*Azad Hind Volunteer Corps*" consisting of three brigades—the "*Jawahar Brigade*", the "*Subhas Brigade*" and the "*Rani of Jhansi Brigade*". The Corps was initiated at Allahabad on December 9th, 1945, by January 1946 the Corps was holding frequent parades and drilling in public under ex INA instructors. Drill came to an end, however, when the local authorities drew the attention of the Corps to the Camps and Parades Control Order, which they had been openly defying. During the following three months the idea spread and similar organisations came to notice in other parts of the United Provinces, by the end of March, there were indications that organisations had been established in Bengal, the NWFP, the Punjab, Delhi, Madras, Bombay and the Central Provinces. The Corps came into conflict with the Punjab authorities in February 1946, when 47 out of 200 uniformed volunteers who marched in procession at Rawalpindi were arrested, but were released the following day on receipt of assurances of their good behaviour from a Congress deputation. At the end of March, "*Major General*" Shah Nawaz of the Indian National Army came prominently into the picture and he has since then been a dominating figure in the affairs of the Corps. He had discussions with the Congress leaders at Simla during the second week of May 1946, and it is understood that a few days later, he received sanction to go ahead with his plans, which included the reorganising of all existing nationalist volunteer corps in India under the guidance of the Indian National Congress. He was allotted an office for the *Azad Hind Volunteer Corps* in the All India Congress Committee Office at Allahabad. On 25-9-1946 a conference of about 150 provincial organisers and representatives of the various Congress volunteer organisations was held in Delhi, at which "*Major General*" Shah Nawaz produced a draft constitution for a national volunteer corps. After some discussion the name "*Azad Hind Volunteer Corps*" was dropped and the name "*Hindustani Seva Dal*" was substituted. A detailed constitution was adopted by the meeting and was approved by the Congress President. A copy was then circulated on October 1st to all provincial Congress Committees for consideration and suggestions before submitting a final draft to the Congress Working Committee. The constitution declared that the object of the *Seva Dal* was to instil by practice and precept the qualities of discipline, self-sacrifice and reliance in the Indian people and to mobilise their energies for the independence struggle under the auspices of the Indian National Congress. The Congress Working Committee was declared to be the supreme controlling body of the organisation, with the Congress President as Chief Officer, and was authorised to appoint a General Officer (Shah Nawaz) in charge of the entire organisation, responsible for the training, organisation and uniform of volunteers and coordinating the activities of the *Dal* in each province. Provision was made for a branch of the *Dal* in each Congress Province and for the necessary controlling committees and officers. It was declared that funds should be provided for the Central Office by the AICC, and for the provincial

offices by PCC's, and the organisation was required to hold aloof from party politics within Congress. General uniformity in the dress of volunteers was prescribed throughout India, with distinguishing marks for each province. Volunteers were required to work without payment, but paid whole-time workers and instructors were to be appointed. In connection with the Meerut Session of Congress, an all-India volunteer camp was opened at Meerut on October 20th. Each province was asked to send four men and one woman to this camp, who would subsequently form the nucleus of the Volunteer Corps raised in the provinces. Travelling expenses and uniform were to be provided by the province concerned. After training these organisers were to be placed in command of the various units of the Volunteer Corps raised for the Congress session and subsequently utilised for the organisation of the provincial units of the Seva Dal. Those who attended the camp were trained, amongst other things, in musket drill with lathis and were shown the mechanism and use of rifles.

(b) Red Shirts

The Red Shirt or Khudai Khidmatgars is a Congress Volunteer organisation confined almost entirely to the NWFP, where it was founded by Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan in 1928. It derives its popular name from the colour of the uniform worn by its volunteers; this consists of a red shirt and *Pathan* trousers. The Red Shirts began to take a prominent part in political activities in the NWFP soon after their organisation came into existence, and in 1930 they were involved in grave disturbances at Peshawar and other places in the province. Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan was arrested on 23-4-1930 and many Red Shirts were imprisoned. In March 1931, Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan was released and almost immediately toured the Province, asking his followers to prepare for a greater struggle. Disorder increased and his extension of his activities to the trans-frontier tribes created a dangerous situation. He was again arrested in December, 1931, when the Red Shirts were declared unlawful. Red Shirt membership in May 1931 was 16,000. The ban on the organisation and the restrictions on Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan were removed in 1937 and a fillip was given to the movement by Mr Gandhi's visit to the NWFP in April 1938. In May 1939, the Red Shirts claimed a membership of 49,169. Until 1931 the Red Shirts appeared to have existed independently of Congress, although close liaison was maintained between the two bodies. In August 1931 it was resolved by the AICC that the Khudai Khidmatgars should form a part of the Congress volunteer organisation. Since then the Red Shirts have maintained a loose allegiance to the Congress, although the real direction and control of the organisation has remained in the hands of Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan. With the installation of the Muslim League Ministry in the NWFP in 1942 the Red Shirts lost some of their influence and by mid-1942 membership stood at 11,747. Following the arrests of Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan and a large number of Red Shirts in August 1942 and succeeding months, the organisation lost ground and by the end of 1943 membership had fallen to 8120. With the release of Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan in early 1945, however, the movement began to revive. An elaborate programme was drawn up and training centres were established at important places in the NWFP. At the end of 1944 membership stood at 9495 and by the end of 1945 it had risen to 12,751.

Azad Hind Dal (Forward Block)

A number of volunteer organisations, modelled on the Indian National Army, have come into being since the end of 1945. Some of these owe allegiance to Congress and some to the Forward Bloc. The titles of these organisations are many and varied, but their one common denominator

is that all contain some reference to the Azad Hind Fauj (INA) or its founder, Mr Subhas Chandra Bose. Great difficulty is experienced in classifying these organisations under their proper party heads; the more so because when the proposal was first mooted to raise an All India Congress Volunteer Corps and incorporate in it existing Congress Volunteer Organisations, the name first chosen was Azad Hind Volunteer Corps, which bears a close resemblance to the name of the principal Forward Bloc Volunteer Organisation, the Azad Hind Dal. Another complication has been introduced by the fact that from January 1946 until the termination of the ban on the Forward Bloc, the Forward Bloc itself was known in the UP as the Azad Hind Dal, with the object of evading the ban. It therefore follows that membership figures for the Azad Hind Dal, and its allied organisations under the guidance or control of the Forward Bloc, are somewhat nebulous. The decision to organise an Azad Hind Dal on an all-India basis was taken at a meeting of the Forward Bloc held at Calcutta in December 1945. Although branches of the Azad Hind Dal have been reported in Bengal, Bihar, the CP and Delhi, very little real progress has been made as yet in its organisation on an all-India scale, and in the "Netaji Azad Hind Fund" appeal issued by Sardar Sardul Singh Cavisheer, President of the All India Forward Bloc, on October 1st, 1946, the organisation of an All India Volunteer Corps was still included as an important item in the proposed future programme of the Forward Bloc. In this appeal it was stated that the Forward Bloc had decided to prepare the country immediately for "the post-war revolution on the basis of aggressive revolutionary tactics." In order to fulfill its "revolutionary task" the Forward Bloc proposed "with the help of the INA men and officers to organise all over the country militant voluntary corps well versed in the art of guerilla and general warfare." A detailed account of the formation and growth of the Azad Hind Dal in the CP and Berar is available and is probably representative of its development in other parts of the country. The Dal was originally formed in the CP by the Forward Bloc and the Hindustan Red Army—a separate volunteer organisation which now owes allegiance to the CSP rather than to the Forward Bloc. The first branch was established in Nagpur in early 1946 and by the middle of the year some 37 branches had been opened with a total membership of 2151. The aim of the Dal is reported to be to complete the work started by Mr Subhas Bose for the independence of India and become eventually the national militia of India. The organisation is divided into three sections:

- (i) the Azad Hind Dal (for men);
- (ii) the Bal Sena (for children);
- (iii) the Laksmi Pathak (for women).

As its activities have increased, committees have been set up for publicity and propaganda, for drill, intellectual training and recruitment and for the collection of statistics relating to the geographical position of police stations, post offices, Government offices, etc. A 12-point pledge is required to be signed by every prospective recruit, viz., to renounce non-violence, wear *Khadi* and carry out the Congress constructive programme; to consider the British as his bitterest enemy and be ready to paralyse the Government machinery when called upon to do so; to report on the movement of the "agents of Government" and be ready to kill traitors and their families; to have complete faith in the Dal; to obey orders and discipline; to keep the Dal's secrets and to report the presence of undesirables in it. The uniform prescribed for the volunteers is blue shorts, white shirts and black caps with "Jai Hind" badges. Besides physical exercises, members are taught squad drill and signalling. There were a number of open breaches by the Dal of the Camps and Parades (Control) Order, 1944, before the Order expired with the

Defence of India Rules on 30-9-1946. Volunteers have been warned to be on the alert as to the CID and to be cautious in their dealings with the police and the army. Up to the middle of 1946 only four branches of the Bal Sena had been reported in the province and only two small branches of the Laksmi Pathak.

Mahabir Dal

The Dal is a Hindu volunteer organisation of a communal character, which wields considerable influence among Sanatanist Hindus. In the Punjab, where it has the bulk of its membership, it is known as the Punjab Sanatan Dharam Mahabir Dal. It is financed by the Punjab Sanatan Dharam Pritinidhi Sabha, whose financial position is reported to be good. Membership of the Dal rose from 1000 in 1941 to 21,000 in June 1943, fell to 15,000 in the latter half of 1943 and has remained stationary ever since. Outside the Punjab, the Dal has branches in the United Provinces, the NWFP, Bihar, Sind and Delhi, although it has not been mentioned for some time in reports from Bihar and Sind. Its members render social service at Hindu religious fairs, and it is not considered dangerous.

Hindu Mahasabha Volunteer Organisations

- (1) Ram Sena.
- (2) Hindustan National Guards.

The forming of a Hindu National Militia or Ram Sena was formally approved by the All India Hindu Mahasabha at its annual session at Calcutta in December 1939 and a subcommittee, consisting of Dr Moonje and another, was appointed to tour the provinces and urge all Hindu volunteer organisations to merge into a single body. Despite Dr Moonje's intensive propaganda in this behalf, however, the attempt to centralise the Hindu volunteer movement met with little success from its inception and the initial failure was further accentuated by the orders passed by the Government of India in 1940 banning the wearing of uniforms and drilling. In mid-1940, it was reported that only in the Central Provinces and Bihar had the Ram Sena been organised with any success. Membership in the Central Provinces was 1500 and in Bihar 2155. Volunteers received instructions in military and lathi drill, fencing and Hindu mythology. A year later, the Central Provinces' membership had dropped to 735, and in Bihar 2766 Hindu Sabha volunteers of all kinds were reported; in Bombay there were said to be 80 members of the Ram Sena and in the United Provinces 1335. During the period 1942-45 the Ram Sena apparently ceased to function in all the provinces except the United Provinces, where membership rose to 6493, although in Madras Hindu Mahasabha volunteers numbering 6150 were reported. On October 31st, 1946, Dr Shyama Prasad Mukharji, President of the All India Hindu Mahasabha, announced that steps were being taken to inaugurate a new body, known as the Hindustan National Guards, to meet the need for a well organised and disciplined body of youths, who would fearlessly defend their rights and interests and the honour of their womenfolk in the supreme crisis that threatened the very existence of Hindus in Bengal. The organisation was to start work forthwith in Calcutta and it was hoped that it would soon extend to every town and village in Bengal and possibly to other parts of India. On 7-11-1946 it was reported that financial help had been assured to Dr Mukharji and that the Bengal Provincial Hindu Sabha had drawn up a scheme for the recruitment and training of recruits to the Guards; the total expenditure had been estimated at Rs 20 lakhs. The aims and objects of the Guards were, among others:

- (i) to defend Hindu interests and religion,
- (ii) to promote Hindu culture and to establish communal harmony,
- (iii) to consolidate all sections of Hindus and to build up Hindu Defence on a sound basis against future aggression,
- (iv) to defend the honour of Hindu women,
- (v) to help the rehabilitation of Hindus in their own homes, in predominantly Muslim localities, and to ensure the safety of Hindu residents by organising *mohalla* defence committees.

There was also a provision in the scheme for the maintenance of specially trained emergency battalions to be sent to affected areas in times of emergency, in order to strengthen and coordinate the local Hindu Defence Units. It was proposed to maintain emergency battalions in the headquarters of every district in East Bengal. It was proposed to train 10,000 men in the initial stage and an allowance of Rs 20 per month plus uniform (not prescribed as yet) was laid down for all cadres. Later it was decided that, in order to secure the cooperation of other communities, Sikhs, Gurkhas, Buddhists and others should be enrolled in the Guards. Another decision was to start an Ambulance Unit attached to the Guards. In mid-November the publication of a book in English by Dr Shyama Prasad Mukharji entitled "The Great Calcutta Killing—Who is Responsible?" was announced, of which the entire sale proceeds were to be earmarked for the Hindustan National Guards' Fund.

Independent Labour Party Volunteer Corps or Samata Sainik Dal

This is the volunteer organisation of Dr Ambedkar's All India Scheduled Classes Federation. It is at present confined to the Central Provinces and Bombay Province. In the former, it has grown steadily from 1227 members in mid-1943 to 4500 in mid-1946 and in the latter from 15 members in mid-1944 to 1065 members in mid-1946. Its financial position is believed to be unsatisfactory. It has recently come to notice both in the Central Provinces and Bombay in connexion with picketing of the Provincial Legislatures. Although its numbers are small at present, reports indicate a steady expansion and the opening of a number of new branches in recent months. It has dangerous potentialities.

Majlis-i-Ahrar-i-Islam-i-Hind

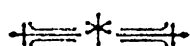
The Ahrars, as they are popularly known, are a militant Muslim organisation limited largely to the Punjab and the United Provinces. In the Punjab, the organisation is called Jaish-i-Ahrar-i-Islam. The organisation was founded in 1931, when a number of Nationalist Muslims broke away from Congress. The Ahrars took a prominent part in violent demonstrations against the Kashmir Government in 1931-32 and later in the Shahidganj agitation at Lahore in 1936. Ahrar volunteers are maintained to help at religious functions and during religious agitation. Although, from a religious point of view, the Ahrars are an extremist and almost fanatical group, their nationalist political leanings have brought them into opposition with the Muslim League and with the steady growth in power of the Muslim League, their influence has declined in recent years. There are branches in the Punjab, the United Provinces, Delhi, the NWFP, and Bombay. The total strength of the organisation in mid-1946 was 3145, as compared with 3700 in mid-1943, 3239 in mid-1944 and 2924 in mid-1945. Instances have been reported during 1946 of small parties of Ahrar volunteers marching in uniform, carrying hatchets, in

the NWFP. Although their influence is declining and their number is small, the Ahrars are still potentially dangerous, because of their fanaticism, and any reconciliation between themselves and the Muslim League would make them far more dangerous, particularly in the event of serious communal disorder in the provinces in which they are active.

Hindustan Red Army

The Hindustan Red Army is a well-known revolutionary volunteer organisation of the CP and Berar, which was formed in May, 1939, by a Nagpur Communist group, led by Messrs Maganlal Bagdi, B.N. Mukerji, V.S. Dandekar and Shyam Narain Kashmiri, ex-convicts of the Nagpur Conspiracy Case. The Raipur branch came to notice prominently in March-April 1941, when it issued certain revolutionary leaflets in Hindi and in English. The following year, in May 1942, the Nagpur branch cooperated closely with Congress in connexion with the formation of Saurakshak Dals and the training of volunteers. Members of the "Army" were said to have been responsible for organising an armed raid on a Police station near Nagpur during the August 1942 disturbances and by September, 1942, it had become clear that all the organised destruction of Government property and communications in the Province had been organised and carried out by the HRA. Meanwhile its leaders, Maganlal Bagdi, Shyam Narain Kashmiri and V.S. Dandekar had gone underground and the organisation had been declared an unlawful association. Maganlal Bagdi, the most important leader, was eventually arrested and was sentenced to transportation for life on 7-2-1943. Thereafter the organisation remained moribund until the beginning of 1946, when attempts were made to revive it and reorganise it under the name of "Jai Hind Dal", in order to avoid the ban on its activities. On 28-4-46, Maganlal Bagdi was released from jail and immediately set to work to revive the Hindustan Red Army. He established his headquarters in a tent over which sentries were placed day and night and purchased three motorcycles for the use of supervisors and dispatch riders. In a tour of the Province he narrated his exploits during 1942 and received a number of purses. An agreement was reached with another smaller local volunteer organisation, the Kernal Bagh Akhara, to impart joint military training to the members of the two organisations and to supply members to a joint "Toofan Dal" or "Death Squad", consisting of forty trusted workers trained on terrorist lines and ready for any action that might be called for in the fight for freedom. In June, 1946, the present CP Ministry lifted the ban imposed on the HRA and in July, 1946, one of its members was appointed a Public Prosecutor in the Province. Maganlal Bagdi, V.S. Dandekar and other leaders of the "Army" are all advocates of violence and have strongly supported the underground activities of the CSP and the Patri Sarkar in Satara District of Bombay Province. In November, 1946, leaders of the Patri Sarkar and the Maharashtra Provincial Rashtra Seva Dal visited the CP and held private meetings with the HRA leaders, at which it was claimed that 146 branches of the HRA had been opened in the Province and that the membership of the Nagpur branch alone was 700. A feature of HRA policy is the importance it attaches to the winning over of members of the Police and Military forces. Although at present confined to the Central Provinces and Berar, the Hindustan Red Army is a potentially dangerous organisation, particularly so in view of its close alliance with the similar Patri Sarkar organisation of Bombay Provinces.

E.J. Beveridge
9-12-1946.



4. Volunteer Organisations in the Central Provinces and Berar

Report by the Assistant Inspector General of Police, Special Branch, to the Chief Secretary, Government of the Central Provinces and Berar; 12 September 1946. File No. 14; Political and Military Department, Government of the Central Provinces and Berar (1946); Madhya Pradesh State Archives.

Report on the Volunteer Organisations in the Central Provinces and Berar (from 1-11-45 to 31-4-46)

1. Azad Hind Dal

Origin

The Azad Hind Dal was originally formed by the Forward Bloc and the Hindustan Red Army in December. In a press statement, R.S. Ruikar, FB [Forward Bloc] appealed to students and youths to join in large numbers and advertised the formation of a children's branch known as the Bal Sena. The first branch took shape in Nagpur early in 1946 and came to notice on the 23rd January when a procession was taken out on the occasion of Subhas Chandra Bose's 50th anniversary. Due to the interest evinced by the Congress High Command in defending prominent members of the INA who were court-martialled for alleged flagrant breaches of the law and for waging war against the State many of these dals are functioning under the control of Congress and several instructors chiefly ex-INA personnel are being paid by Congress Committees.

Aim:

The aim of the Dal is to complete the work started by Subhas Bose for independence and to become eventually the national militia.

Organisation

At an informal meeting of the Forward Bloc leaders at Jubbulpore in February 1946 the organisation of Azad Hind Dals on the lines of the INA throughout the province was approved and a subcommittee formed to frame rules and regulations. There were to be three sections, namely the Azad Hind Dal (for men), Bal Sena (for children) and the Laxmi Pathak (for women). As the activities increased the following committees were appointed:

1. Publicity and Propaganda Committee.
2. Soldier Committee which consists of the following subcommittees: (a) Drill Committee, (b) Intellectual Classes Committee and (c) Recruitment Committee.
3. Information Committee which is entrusted with the collection of information regarding the geographical position of Police Stations, Post Offices, Government offices, etc.

Joseph William Rodrigues, ex-INA of Yeotmal, was put in charge of the Provincial organisation and ex-INA men were appointed as Instructors of the various branches.

A twelve-point pledge is required to be signed by every prospective recruit to the Azad Hind Dal, viz. to renounce non-violence wear khadi and carry out Congress constructive programme; consider the British as his bitterest enemy and be ready to paralyse the Government machinery when called upon to do so; to report on the movements of the 'agents of Government' and be ready to kill traitors and their families; to have complete faith in the Dal; to obey orders implicitly; to keep the Dal's secrets and to report the presence of undesirables in it.

Branches and Membership

Visits of Mrs Aruna Asaf Ali and Vimal Protibha Devi and the enthusiastic efforts of R.S. Ruiker, P.K. Tare and H.V. Kamath have given an impetus to this organisation and within a short time branches have been formed in most of the districts in the province. There are about 37 branches with a total membership of 2151. The Nagpur Dal has the largest membership and is most active. It is composed of seven brigades and also one for juveniles consisting of six sections, the Nehru Brigade being intended mainly for mill hands. The Dal has seven branches in the Hoshangabad district and six in the Jubbulpore district.

Funds

The Nagpur branch is reported to have collected Rs 1000 by selling photographs of Subhas Chandra Bose, by collecting petty donations and by sending round charity boxes at public meetings. On the 3rd March at a secret meeting of the Dal the collection of funds for the organisation was entrusted to a committee consisting of R.S. Ruiker, P.K. Tare, L.M. Wakhere and V.G. Balwaik.

Breaches of the Camps and Parades (Control) Order, 1944

Beside physical exercises members are taught squad drill and signalling and there were many open breaches of the Camps and Parades (Control) Order, 1944, notably at Nagpur, Saugor, Hoshangabad, Wardha, Bhandara and Yeotmal, which were brought to the notice of the District Magistrates concerned.

General Activities

Vishwanath Yadao Tamaskar announcing the formation of the Azad Hind Dals in the Durg district, at a meeting held on the 13th April, appealed for 25 men from each patwari circle to be trained to sacrifice their lives to uproot the British rule. At Seoni (Chhindwara) Abdul Rahman Faruqui advocated the formation of the Azad Hind Dal in order to wrest freedom, which he said, could never be obtained by begging. Volunteers were warned, at an intellectual class, to be on the alert about the CID and to be cautious in their dealing with the police and the army. Ramchandra Hatwar ex-INA speaking at a flag salutation ceremony held on the 7th March advised members to contact and win over police officers and at Chhindwara and Seoni (Chhindwara) speaking to a gathering of about 2000 in February, after criticising the Pakistan scheme and exhorting the audience to organise themselves on the lines of the INA, he appealed for sympathy and toleration towards the army and the police. C.A. Kirde, ex-INA at an intellectual class held at Nagpur on the 9th February explained how to snatch a revolver from a police officer and on the 27th April at another class explained the various parts of a rifle to about 30 members.

Volunteers of the Dal provided a guard of honour to Vimal Protibha Debi on the 1st April when she visited Nagpur and maintained order at the session of the All India Trade Union Congress held in April 1946. At Jubbulpore the Dal actively participated in making arrangements for the Jubbulpore Tahsil Kisan Conference held on the 27th April.

At Yeotmal 15 men underwent training in squad drill and saluting at a naiks' training class held in May. After training these members were to have been deputed to establish Azad Hind Dals in different places in the province.

At a private meeting held at Nagpur on the 24th March it was decided to hold a Provincial INA conference in June but the idea was abandoned at the last moment owing to Major Shah Nawaz's inability to be present.

The name of the Azad Hind Dal at Demoh (Seugor) was changed to the Congress Swayam Sewak Dal.

Bal Sena

The "Bal Sena" is an offshoot of the Azad Hind Dal and branches exist at Nagpur, Damoh (Seugor) and Bhandare only.

The Gondia (Bhandare) branch of the New Yuwak Sangh was converted into a Bal Sena of this Dal. As members paraded with uniforms the District Magistrate was approached to warn the organisers under the Camps & Parade (Control) Order, 1944.

Laxmi Pathak

At a meeting at Nagpur on the 9th February under the auspices of the Dal, Mrs Tara and Mrs Kashikar were authorised to start a women's section of the Dal. Attempts have not met with success so far. One small branch was established at Banigir Beda (Nagpur) with a membership of 15 and another of Yeotmal with 24 members but the latter is inactive.

2. Kernalbagh Akhada [alias] Rashtriya Dal

Organisation

The Kernalbagh Akhada (Nagpur) has recently been reorganised under the name of the Rashtriya Dal. It first came to notice under the new name on the 26th December 1945 when it presented a guard of honour to Shankar Rao Deo of Poona. At present the membership is 2500 and has seven branches in Nagpur. Attempts are being made to establish branches at Amraoti and Akola.

Aims

To avenge the excesses committed by Government servants during the 1942 rebellion and to secure the independence of India.

Activities

Members are taught Indian games and physical drill. Intellectual classes were held at which members were initiated into politics. At an intellectual class held on the 5th January, Shamlal Nai explained the constitution of Germany praised the Nazis for their organisation and said that the British were able to rule India on account of their armed might, their intelligence and their treachery and declared that the only way to get rid of them was to organise Indians on military lines.

A library known as Veer Bhushan Library is maintained for the use of members and is reported to contain literature of a revolutionary type.

Funds

It has the financial backing of the rich merchants of Shukrawari. [It] possesses a sum of Rs 10,000 and monthly subscriptions from [members?] amount to Rs 1200. The Dal owns a hotel in the Model Mills which is managed by Tulsiram Jagannath Saoji of Shukrawari.

The Toofan Dal or the "Death Squad" is an offshoot of the Rashtriya Dal. In January 1946, Iswar s/o Bagu Deshmukh with another member of the Kernal Bagh Akhada [alias] Rashtriya Dal visited Satara (Bombay Presidency) to study the underground tactics followed by the Toofan Dal of Satara Patri Sarkar. On their return the Toofan Dal was formed with the help of one Narayan Maratha of the "Patri Sarkar" of Satara. It consists at present of 40 trusted workers, trained on terrorist lines ready for any action that may be called [for] in the fight for freedom.

The Toofan Dal is under the leadership of Dome Purnis Deshmukh and Mahadeo Narain and its members are recruited from the Kernal Bagh Akhada and the Hindustan Red Army (Jai Hind Dal) of Nagpur.

3. Hindustan Red Army or Jai Hind Dal

Organisation

As the ban on the Hindustan Red Army continued its organisers at Nagpur after attempting to amalgamate it with other organisations like the Azad Hind Dal, the Rashtriya Sewa Dal and the Rashtriya Yuwak Sangh, decided at the beginning of this year, to revive its activities and reorganise the Hindustan Red Army under the name of Jai Hind Dal. Although the organisation functioned as a separate body altogether, it worked in cooperation with the Kernal Bagh Akhada [alias] Rashtriya Dal and the Azad Hind Dal.

Since his release from jail on the 28th April Maganlal Bagdi toured widely narrating his exploits during the 1942 movements advertising the Hindustan Red Army and receiving purses. He also announced his intention of starting a paid army. The headquarters of the Hindustan Red Army has been accommodated in a tent over which sentries are placed by day and by night and three motorcycles were purchased for the use of supervisors and despatch riders. It is understood that Maganlal Bagdi, the leader of the Hindustan Red Army intends to press for the enlistment of members of the Hindustan Red Army in the police force and to secure arms for training purposes.

Three new branches were formed at Nagpur, viz. at Mahal, Sitabuldi and Magan Maidan, where parades are held regularly.

Policy

Maganlal Bagdi, Shyam Narayan Kashmiri and V.S. Dandekar all advocates of violence have studiously supported the underground activities of the CSP and the Satara Patri Sarkar and it is not improbable that the Hindustan Red Army will be trained on these lines in future though no definite policy has been laid down at present.

General Activities

In June last six members were sent to a CSP camp held at Dehradun. The Jai Hind Dal is reported to have started drilling in contravention of the Parades and Camps (Control) Order, 1944.

The agreement between this Dal and the Kernal Bagh Akhada to impart joint military training and to supply members to the Toofan Dal (described under the Kernal Bagh Akhada [alias] Rashtriya Dal), has brought about the virtual amalgamation of these two organisations and constitutes a potential source of danger.

4. Rashtriya Swayam Sewak Sangh

Membership

There was a slight increase in attendance which was 30,826 as against 30,074 mentioned in the last report. Thirteen new branches were opened and two became defunct.

Funds

No outstanding collections came to notice during this period and there was no change in the financial condition of the Sangh which continued to be sound.

Activities

General activities were confined to Physical Training including lathi, lejim [archery], spear and other exercises and intellectual classes at which the stereotyped injunctions were emphasised in regard to unity, secrecy, discipline and need for increasing the sphere of operations for the protection of Hinduism and to combat anti-Hindu activities. Special programmes were drawn up for various festivals and included flag salutation ceremonies and other demonstrations of physical and lathi and other exercises and talks on the traditions of the Sangh and its aims and objects.

Picnics and camps were held at several centres in the province. At one of the functions in Chenda District attack and defence tactics were taught and at another in Wardha slow marching to a band was performed. On the 16th and 17th December two camps were held at Jubbulpore and were each attended by over 200 members. A subscription of Re 1 was taken from every member present and the dress prescribed for the occasion was Khaki or blue shorts, white shirts, black caps and belts. Discipline was strictly maintained and punishments awarded to defaulters. The Chief Organiser at Jubbulpore was warned by the District Magistrate for not obtaining permission to hold the camps but nowhere else was any action taken under the Camps and Parades (Control) Order as it was held that these gatherings were more in the nature of picnics or rallies.

The communal character of the Sangh was well instilled into members by lesser lights at so-called intellectual classes but M.S. Golwalkar, Sar Sangh Chalak's utterances on this point were rather outspoken. Addressing about 1000 volunteers at a rally held at Gadarwada (Hoshangabad) on the 17th and 18th March he urged against fraternising with Muslims on account of the difference in their religion and culture but stressed the need for associating with members of other Hindu organisations. He declared that communal riots, murders and dacoities would be common features of the transitional period but assured his audience that the Sangh which was about 1,50,000 strong was prepared for any emergency, adding that his plan of direct action was complete but would only be made known at the right time. Later at Akola he explained the defects of the Pakistan scheme and criticised Congress for placating Muslims at the expense of the Hindus and averred that the Sangh would oppose the vivisection of India by all means at its command. Another propagandist speaking on the subject of Pakistan stated if India was split up volunteers must be ready for action and should be strong enough to stand up to the Muslim National Guard. Harikrishna Joshi addressing a gathering at Wardha urged the intensification of activities in view of the inevitability [inevitability] of civil war and the important role the Sangh would play in it.

Politically the Sangh supported the ideology of the Hindu Sabha and there were instances in which its members maintained order at election meetings and assisted Hindu Sabha candidates during the elections.

Women's Branch

Branches exist at Nagpur, Wardha, Chanda, Chhindwara, Hoshangabad, Bhandara, Raipur, Amraoti, Akola and Buldana with a total membership of 1070. Two branches of the Samiti were formed at Raipur and 100 members enrolled. Mrs Indirabai Bohre has started training women volunteers in sword drill in the Municipal School, Khamgaon (Buldana).

5. Rashtriya Yuwak Sangh

Branches exist in the Nagpur and Berar divisions and at Raipur, Hoshangabad and Bhandara districts with a total membership of 1761. During the period under review new branches were started at Raipur and Bhandara and the one at Chhindwara which was inactive was revived.

Dindayal Gupta inaugurating a camp at Nagpur on the 24th and 25th December exhorted members to cooperate with other organisations in training youths. On the 6th Feb. at a joint meeting of the Rashtra Sewa Dal, the Jai Hind Dal and the Rashtriya Yuwak Sangh an abortive attempt was made to amalgamate the three organisations.

At Wardha a fortnightly class for members of the Rashtriya Yuwak Sangh was started from the 22nd April to give instructions in constructive work and the use of medicine.

The branch at Dhamtari (Raipur) at a private meeting held on the 5th February decided to change the name of the organisation to Maharashtra Sewa Dal.

Women's Organisation

Branches of the Rashtriya Yuwati Sangh were formed at Akola and Wardha during the period under report. Branches at other places such as Bhandara, Amraoti, Buldana and Yeotmal function spasmodically.

600 women attended the annual meeting of the Rashtriya Yuwati Samiti held at Nagpur on the 16th December at which an exhibition of physical feats was given.

On the Independence Day, sixty girls of the RY Samiti of Amraoti gave a demonstration in physical exercises after which the Independence pledge was read out. P.M. Bapet of Poona exhorted them to be bold and courageous like the Rani of Jhansi. On the 26th February Mrs Radhadevi Goenka after a demonstration of physical feats held at Amraoti advocated the use of Khadi and spinning.

6. Rashtra Sewa Dal

Organisation

Two attempts to reorganise the Dal were made. At a joint meeting of the Rashtra Sewa Dal, the Jai Hind Dal and the Rashtriya Yuwak Sangh held on the 6th February the amalgamation of the three organisations was considered but no decision was arrived at. Later on the 17th Feb. at a private meeting of the Nagpur Provincial Rashtra Sewa Dal held at Tumsar (Bhandara) it was decided to merge all Congress volunteer organisations in the Dal and to extend its activities after the election. Branches exist at Nagpur, Wardha, Chanda, Saugor, Akola and Yeotmal and the total membership is reported to be 939. On the 31st March at a private meeting of the Dal a resolution was passed condemning R.S. Ruikar for enlisting Rashtra Sewa Dal members in the Azad Hind Dal.

Activities

Camps of short duration were held at Tej Bagh and Gumgaon in the Nagpur district and at Wardha. Physical exercises and spinning was done and lectures of political events were given. Uniforms were worn at the camps held in the Nagpur district. At the camp held at Tej Bagh strict discipline was maintained, guards were mounted and admission to the camp was restricted by the issue of passes. S.T. Dharmadhikari speaking to the volunteers on the subject of non-violence declared that violence used in self-defence could not be regarded as violence. H.W. Deshpande warned volunteers to maintain secrecy and stated that the object of the Dal was to serve the Congress in all matters.

Permission was not obtained to hold the camp at Gumgaon but prosecution was considered inadvisable as it was held in connection with the Congress elections.

Shankar Rao Deo of Poona who was given a guard of honour by 200 volunteers of the Dal on the 14th December at Nagpur exhorted them to follow the constructive programme of the

Congress and conserve their energies for the future struggle that may be launched to achieve independence.

Women's Branch

The Rashtra Sewika Dal was inactive during the period.

7. Hanuman Vyayam Prasarak Mandal

Branches of the Hanuman Vyayam Prasarak Mandal exist in the Wardha, Chanda, Betul, Seoni (Chhindwara), Raipur districts and in the four districts of Berar. The financial position is good.

The 31st anniversary of the Mandal was celebrated at Amraoti on the 10th March with the Commissioner, Berar Division, in the chair.

At a wrestling tournament held under the auspices of the Mandal in December 1945, Dr S.G. Patwardhan recalled Subhas Chandra Bose's visit to the institution and exhorted the audience to follow his example and to work wholeheartedly for freedom.

The CP & Berar Physical Education Committee witnessed a demonstration of physical exercises given by the Hanuman Vyayam Prasarak Mandal Amraoti on the 12th February.

It is proposed to hold an all-India Physical Educational Conference in October next and elaborate arrangements are being made in connection with it.

8. Khaksars

The membership of the organisation dwindled from 1050 to 412 due probably to the change in the political situation and the Muslim League's virile propaganda prior to the elections. Defections were chiefly noticed at Jubbulpore, Amraoti and Khandwa where deserters joined the Muslim League. The move to get candidates to contest the elections on the Khaksar Constitution ticket received scant attention and only three disgruntled Muslims sought the aid of the party; one of whom realising that he was injuring his cause asked for the discontinuance of Khaksar propaganda on his behalf. Ten Khaksars from other provinces visited Saugor in March to support a local nominee and one of the two meetings held by them ended in disaster as stones were thrown and the loudspeaker damaged.

A camp attended by 95 Khaksars was held at Ellichpur (Amraoti) from the 14th to 16th February during a religious fair with the object of rendering social service, doing propaganda for the party and selling Khaksar literature. Sentries armed with spades guarded the entrance to the camp and all Khaksars wore the prescribed uniform of khaki shirts and slacks and white Arab style headdresses. A few movements of a military nature were gone through when they assembled for prayers.

The proposal to form an Azad Muslim League found no support in the province.

Martyrs' Day was observed at Nagpur and Amraoti when tributes were paid to Khaksars who [had] lost their lives at Lahore in 1941 on account of their allegiance to their organisation and withdrawal of orders restricting the wearing of uniforms and the performance of drill of a military nature demanded. At the few meetings mostly private held under the auspices of this party the speeches were mainly directed against the Muslim League and the dictatorial attitude of its leader.

9. Muslim National Guard

Membership rose slightly from 2712 to 2909. In view of the political situation and the attention being devoted to this subject at Muslim League meetings rapid development may be expected.

In some districts like Nagpur, Jubbulpore, Chhindwara, Raipur, Akola and Buldana the Guard was overhauled and Commanders appointed. At present activity was confined to physical exercises but a report indicates that it is intended to impart training on the lines of the RSS Sangh. At a private meeting held at Raipur on the 22nd April about 50 members signed the pledge in blood.

10. Samata Sainik Dal

Branches exist at Nagpur, Wardha, Chanda, Bhandara, Amraoti, Akola and Yeotmal. The total membership is 4495 of whom 3000 belong to the Nagpur branch. 26 new branches of the Dal were formed 24 in the Bhandara district and two in the Nagpur district.

J. H. Subhaiya of Hyderabad and President of the All India Samata Sainik Dal attended the Schedule[d] Caste[s] Conference at Nagpur on the 12th December and later a CP&Berar Working Committee of the Samata Sainik Dal was formed at Nagpur consisting of 19 members.

The Dal maintained order at meetings. With the permission [of] the District Magistrate a rally was held at Bednora (Amraoti) on the 24th and 25th February when physical training was imparted and training in lathi, squad and legim [archery] drill was given. At Bhandara an infringement of the embargo on the wearing of uniform was brought to the notice of the District Magistrate.

Nothing of interest concerning the other volunteer organisations such as the Red Guards, Arya Vir Dal, Loksewa Mandal, Mahakoshal Sewa Dal came to notice during the period under review.

2.ii CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY PROCEEDINGS, DECEMBER 1946

Extracts from the debates on the Aims and Objects Resolution, 13–19 December 1946. *Constituent Assembly of India Debates*, Vol. I, 9–23 December 1946 (New Delhi, 1947).

1. Friday, the 13th December 1946

The Constituent Assembly of India met in the Constitution Hall, New Delhi, at Eleven of the Clock. Mr Chairman (The Hon'ble Dr Rajendra Prasad) in the Chair.

RESOLUTION RE: AIMS AND OBJECTS

Mr Chairman: Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru will now move the Resolution which stands in his name.

The Hon'ble Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru (United Provinces: General): *[Mr Chairman, this Constituent Assembly has now been in session for some days. It has done much formal business, but more is yet to be done. We have been cutting our way and clearing the ground on which we intend to erect the edifice of a constitute. It, however, seems proper that before we proceed further we should clearly understand where we are going and what we intend building. It is apparent that on such occasions details are unnecessary. In building, you will, no doubt, use

*English translation in Hindustani speech begins.

each brick after mature consideration. Usually, when one desires to construct a building, one must have a plan for the structure that one wishes to erect and then collect the material required. For a long time we have been having various plans for a free India in our minds, but now, when we are beginning the actual work, I hope, you will be at one with me when I say, that we should present a clear picture of this plan to ourselves, to the people of India and to the world at large. The Resolution that I am placing before you defines our aims, describes and outline of the plan and points the way which we are going to tread.

You all know that this Constituent Assembly is not what many of us wished it to be. It has come into being under particular conditions and the British Government has a hand in its birth. They have attached to it certain conditions. We accepted the State Paper, which may be called the foundation of this Assembly, after serious deliberations and we shall endeavour to work within its limits. But you must not ignore the source from which this Assembly derives its strength. Governments do not come into being by State Papers. Governments are, in fact, the expression of the will of the people. We have met here today because of the strength of the people behind us and we shall go as far as the people—not of any party or group but the people as a whole—shall wish us to go. We should, therefore, always keep in mind the passions that lie in the hearts of the masses of the Indian people and try to fulfill them.

I am sorry there are so many absentees. Many members who have a right to come and attend the meeting are not here to-day. This, in one sense, increases our responsibility. We shall have to be careful that we do nothing which may cause uneasiness in others or goes against any principle. We do hope that those who have abstained, will soon join us in our deliberations, since this Constitution can only go as far as the strength behind it can push it. It has even been and shall always be our ardent desire to see the people of India united together so that we may frame a constitution which will be acceptable to the masses of the Indian people. It is, at the same time, manifest that when a great country starts to advance, no party or group can stop it. This House, although it has met in the absence of some of its members, will continue functioning and try to carry out its work at all costs.

The Resolution that I am placing before you is in the nature of a pledge. It has been drafted after mature deliberation and efforts have been made to avoid controversy. A great country is sure to have a lot of controversial issues; but we have tried to avoid controversy as much as possible. The Resolution deals with fundamentals which commonly held and have been accepted by the people. I do not think this Resolution contains anything which was outside the limitations laid down by the British Cabinet or anything which may be disagreeable to any Indian, no matter to what party or group he belongs. Unfortunately, our country is full of difference, but no one, except perhaps a few, would dispute the fundamentals which this Resolution lays down. The Resolution states that it is our firm and solemn resolve to have a sovereign Indian republic. We have not mentioned the word “republic” till this time; but you will well understand that a free India can be nothing but a republic.

On this occasion, when the representatives of the Indian States are not present, I desire to make it clear how this Resolution will affect the Indian State. It has also been suggested, and the suggestion may take the form of an amendment laying down that since certain sections of the House are not present, the consideration of the Resolution may be postponed. In my opinion, such an amendment is not in keeping with the spirit of the times, because if we do not approve the first objective that we are placing before ourselves, before our country and before the world at large, our deliberations will become meaningless and lifeless, and the people will have no interest in our work. Our intention regarding the States must be clearly understood.

We do desire that all section regarding the States must be clearly understood. We do desire that all sections of India should willingly participate in the future Indian Union but in what way and with what sort of government rests with them. The Resolution does not go into these details. It contains only the fundamentals. It imposes nothing on the States against their will. The point to be considered is how they will join us and what sort of administration they will have. I do not wish to express my personal opinion on the matter. Nevertheless I must say that no State can have an administration which goes against our fundamental principles or gives less freedom than obtaining in other parts of India. The Resolution does not concern itself with what form of government they will have or whether the present Rajas and Nawabs will continue or not. These things concern the people of the States. It is quite possible that the people may like to have their Rajas. The decision will rest with them. Our republic shall include the whole of India. If a part within it desires to have its own type of administration it will be at liberty to have it.

I do not wish that anything should be added to or subtracted from the Resolution. It is my hope that this House will do nothing that may appear in Papers, so that, at no time, should people, who are concerned with these problems but who are not present here, be able to say that this House indulged in irregular talk.

I desire to make it clear that this Resolution does not go into details. It only seeks to show how we shall lead India to gain the objectives laid down in it. You will take into consideration its words and I hope you will accept them; but the main thing is the spirit behind it. Laws are made of words but this Resolution is something higher than the law. If you examine its words like lawyers you will produce only a lifeless thing. We are at present standing midway between two eras; the old order is fast changing, yielding place to the new. At such a juncture we have to give a live message to India and to the world at large. Later on we can frame our Constitution in whatever words we please. At present we have to send out a message to show what we have resolved to attempt to do. As to what form or shape this Resolution, this declaration will ultimately take, we shall see later. But one thing is, however, certain: it is not a law; but is something that breathes life in human minds.

I hope the House will pass the Resolution which is of a special nature. It is an undertaking with ourselves and with the millions of our brothers and sisters who live in this great country. If it is passed, it will be a sort of pledge that we shall have to carry out. With this expectation and in this form, I place it before you. You have copies of it in Hindustani with you. I will therefore not take more of your time to read it one way, or I will, however, read it in English and speak further on it in that language.]*

I beg to move:

- “(1) This Constituent Assembly declares its firm and solemn resolve to proclaim India as an Independent Sovereign Republic and to draw up for her future governance a Constitution;
- 2) Wherein the territories that now comprise British India, the territories that now form the Indian States, and such other parts of India as are outside British India and the States as well as such other territories as are willing to be constituted into the Independent Sovereign India, shall be a Union of them all; and
- 3) Wherein the said territories, whether with their present boundaries or with such others as may be determined by the Constituent Assembly and thereafter according to the Law of the Constitution, shall possess and retain the status of autonomous Units, together with residuary powers, and exercise all powers and functions of government and administration, save and except such powers and functions as are vested in or assigned to the Union, or as are inherent or implied in the Union or resulting therefrom; and
- (4) Wherein all power and authority of the Sovereign Independent India, its constituent parts and organs of government, are derived from the people; and

* English translation of Hindustani speech ends.

- (5) Wherein shall be guaranteed and secured to all the people of India justice, social, economic and political equality of status, of opportunity, and before the law; freedom of thought, expression, belief, faith, worship, vocation, association and action, subject to law and public morality; and
- (6) Wherein adequate safeguards shall be provided for minorities, backward and tribal areas, and depressed and other backward classes; and
- (7) Whereby shall be maintained the integrity of the territory of the Republic and its sovereign rights on land, sea, and air according to justice and the law of civilised nations, and
- (8) this ancient land attains its rightful and honoured place in the world and make its full and willing contribution to the promotion of world peace and the welfare of mankind."

Sir, this is the fifth day of this first session of the Constituent Assembly. Thus far we have labored on certain provisional and procedural matters which are essential. We have a clear field to work upon; we have to prepare the ground and we have been doing that these few days. We have still much to do. We have to pass our Rules of Procedure and to appoint Committees and the like, before we can proceed to the real step, to the real work of this Constituent Assembly, that is the high adventure of giving shape, in the printed and written word, to a Nation's dream and aspiration. But even now, at this stage it is surely desirable that we should give some indication to ourselves, to those who look to this Assembly, to those millions in the country who are looking up to us and to the world at large, as to what we may do, what we seek to achieve, whither we are going. It is with this purpose that I have placed this Resolution before this House. It is a Resolution and yet, it is something much more than a resolution. It is a Declaration. It is a firm resolve. It is a pledge and an undertaking and it is for all of us I hope a dedication. And I wish this House, if I may say so respectfully, should consider this Resolution not in a spirit of narrow legal wording, but rather to look at the spirit behind that Resolution. Words are magic things often enough, but even the magic of words sometimes cannot convey the magic of the human spirit and of a Nation's passion. And so, I cannot say that this Resolution at all conveys the passion that lies in the hearts and the minds of the Indian people today. It seeks very feebly to tell the world of what we have thought or dreamt of so long, and what we now hope to achieve in the near future. It is in that spirit that I venture to place this Resolution before the House and it is in that spirit that I trust the House will receive it and ultimately pass it. And may I, Sir, also, with all respect, suggest to you and to the House that, when the time comes for the passing of this Resolution let it be not done in the formal way by the raising of hands, but much more solemnly, by all of us standing up and thus taking this pledge anew.

The House knows that there are many absentees here and many members who have a right to come here, have not come. We regret that fact because we should have liked to associate with ourselves as many people, as many representatives from the different parts of India and different groups as possible. We have undertaken a tremendous task and we seek the co-operation of all people in that task; because the future of India that we have envisaged is not confined to any group or section or province or other, but it comprises all the four hundred million people of India, and it is with deep regret that we find some benches empty and some colleagues, who might have been here, absent. I do feel, I do hope that they will come and that this House, in its future stages, will have the benefit of the co-operation of all. Meanwhile, there is a duty cast upon us and that is to bear the absentees in mind, to remember always that we are here not to function for one party or one group, but always to think of India as a whole and always to think of the welfare of the four hundred millions that comprise India. We are all now, in our respective spheres, partymen, belonging to this or that group and presumably we shall continue to act in our respective parties. Nevertheless, the time comes when we have to

rise above party and think of the Nation, think sometimes of even the world at large of which our nation is a great part. And when I think of the work of this Constituent Assembly, it seems to me, the time has come when we should, so far as we are capable of it, rise above our ordinary selves and party disputes and think of the great problem before us in the widest and most tolerant and most effective manner so that, whatever we may produce, should be worthy of India as a whole and should be such that the world should recognise that we have functioned, as we should have functioned, in this high adventure.

There is another person who is absent here and who must be in the minds of many of us today—the great leader of our people, the father of our Nation (*applause*)—who has been the architect of this Assembly and all that has gone before it and possibly of much that will follow. He is not here because, in pursuit of his ideals, he is ceaselessly working in a far corner of India. But I have no doubt that his spirit hovers over this place and blesses our undertaking.

As I stand here, Sir, I feel the weight of all manner of things crowding around me. We are at the end of an era and possibly very soon we shall embark upon a new age; and my mind goes back to the great past of India, to the 5,000 years of India's history, from the very dawn of that history which might be considered almost the dawn of human history, till today. All that past crowds around me and exhilarates me and, at the same time, somewhat oppresses me. Am I worthy of that past? When I think also of the future, the greater future I hope, standing on this sword's edge of the present between this mighty past and the mightier future, I tremble a little and feel overwhelmed by this mighty task. We have come here at a strange moment in India's history. I do not know but I do feel there is some magic in this moment of transition from the old to the new, something of that magic which one sees when the night turns into day and even though the day may be a cloudy one, it is day after all, for when the clouds move away, we can see the sun later on. Because of all this I find a little difficulty in addressing this House and putting all my ideas before it and I feel also that in this long succession of thousands of years, I see the mighty figures that have come and gone and I see also the long succession of our comrades who have laboured for the freedom of India. And now we stand on the verge of this passing age, trying, labouring to usher in the new. I am sure the House will feel the solemnity of this moment and will endeavour to treat this Resolution which it is my proud privilege to place before it in that solemn manner. I believe there are a large number of amendments coming before the House. I have not seen most of them. It is open to the House, to any member of this House, to move any amendment and it is for the House to accept it or reject it, but I would, with all respect, suggest that this is not a moment for us to be technical and legal about small matters when we have big things to face, big things to say and big things to do, and therefore I would hope that the House would consider this Resolution in this big manner and not lose itself in wordy quarrels and squabbles.

I think also of the various Constituent Assemblies that have gone before and of what took place at the making of the great American nation when the fathers of that nation met and fashioned out a constitution which has stood the test of so many years, more than a century and a half, and of the great nation which has resulted, which has been built up on the basis of the Constitution. My mind goes back to that mighty revolution which took place also over 150 years ago and to that Constituent Assembly that met in that gracious and lovely city of Paris which has fought so many battles for freedom, to the difficulties that Constituent Assembly had and to how the King and other authorities came in its way, and still it continued. The House will remember that when these difficulties came and even the room for a meeting was denied to the then Constituent Assembly, they betook themselves to an open tennis court and

met there and took the oath, which is called the Oath of the Tennis Court, that they continued meeting in spite of Kings, in spite of the others, and did not disperse till they had finished the task they had undertaken. Well, I trust that it is in that solemn spirit that we too are meeting here and that we, too, whether we meet in this chamber or other chambers, or in the fields or in the marketplace, will go on meeting and continue our work till we have finished it.

Then my mind goes back to a more recent revolution which gave rise to a new type of State, the revolution that took place in Russia and out of which has arisen the Union of the Soviet Socialist Republics, another mighty country which is playing a tremendous part in the world, not only a mighty country but for us in India, a neighbouring country.

So our mind goes back to these great examples and we seek to learn from their success and to avoid their failures. Perhaps we may not be able to avoid failures because some measure of failure is inherent in human effort. Nevertheless, we shall advance, I am certain, in spite of obstructions and difficulties, and achieve and realise the dream that we have dreamt so long. In this Resolution which the House knows, has been drafted with exceeding care, we have tried to avoid saying too much or too little. It is difficult to frame a resolution of this kind. If you say too little, it becomes just a pious resolution and nothing more. If you say too much, it encroaches on the functions of those who are going to draw up a constitution, that is, on the functions of this House. This Resolution is not a part of the constitution we are going to draw up, and it must not be looked at as such. This House has perfect freedom to draw up that Constitution and when others come into this House, they will have perfect freedom too to fashion that constitution. This Resolution therefore steers between these two extremes and lays down only certain fundamentals which I do believe, no group or party and hardly any individual in India can dispute. We say that it is our firm and solemn resolve to have an independent sovereign republic. India is bound to be sovereign, it is bound to be independent and it is bound to be a republic. I will not go into the arguments about monarchy and the rest, but obviously we cannot produce monarchy in India out of nothing. It is not there. If it is to be an independent and sovereign State, we are not going to have an external monarchy and we cannot have a search for some local monarchies. It must inevitably be a republic. Now, some friends have raised the question; "Why have you not put in the word 'democratic' here?" Well, I told them that it is conceivable, of course, that a republic may not be democratic but the whole of our past is witness to this fact that we stand for democratic institutions. Obviously we are aiming at democracy and nothing less than a democracy. What form of democracy, what shape it might take is another matter? The democracies of the present day, many of them in Europe and elsewhere, have played a great part in the world's progress. Yet it may be doubtful if those democracies may not have to change their shape somewhat before long if they have to remain completely democratic. We are not going just to copy, I hope, a certain democratic procedure or an institution of a so called democratic country. We may improve upon it. In any event whatever system of Government we may establish here must fit in with the temper of our people and be acceptable to them. We stand for democracy. It will be for this House to determine what shape to give to that democracy, the fullest democracy, I hope. The House will notice that in this Resolution although we have not used the word 'democratic' because we thought it is obvious that the word 'republic' contains that word and we did not want to use unnecessary words and redundant words, but we have done something much more than using the word. We have given the content of democracy in this Resolution and not only the content of democracy but the content, if I may say so, of economic democracy in this Resolution.

Others might take objection to this Resolution on the ground that we have not said that it should be a Socialist State. Well, I stand for Socialism and, I hope, India will stand for Socialism and that India will go towards the constitution of a Socialist State and I do believe that the whole world will have to go that way. What form of Socialism again is another matter for your consideration. But the main thing is that in such a Resolution, if in accordance with my own desire, I had put in, that we want a Socialist State, we would have put in something which may be agreeable to many and may not be agreeable to some and we wanted this Resolution not to be controversial in regards to such matters. Therefore we have laid down not theoretical words and formulae, but rather the content of the thing we desire. This is important and I take it there can be no dispute about it. Some people have pointed out to me that our mentioning a republic may somewhat displease the Rulers of Indian States. It is possible that this may displease them. But I want to make it clear personally and the House knows, that I do not believe in the monarchical system anywhere, and that in the world today monarchy is a fast disappearing institution. Nevertheless it is not a question of my personal belief in this matter. Our view in regard to these Indian States has been, for many years, first of all that the people of those States must share completely in the freedom to come. It is quite inconceivable to me that there should be different standards and degrees of freedom as between the people in the States and the people outside the States. In what manner the States will be parts of that Union, that is a matter for this House to consider with the representatives of the States. And I hope in all matters relating to the States, this House will deal with the real representatives of the States. We are perfectly willing, I take it, to deal in such matters as appertain to them, with the Rulers or their representatives also, but finally when we make a constitution for India, it must be through the representatives of the people of the States as with the rest of India, who are present here, *(Applause)*. In any event, we may lay down or agree that the measure of freedom must be the same in the States as elsewhere. It is a possibility and personally I should like a measure of uniformity too in regard to the apparatus and machinery of Government. Nevertheless, this is a point to be considered in co-operation and in consultation with States. I do not wish, and I imagine this Constituent Assembly will not like, to impose anything on the States against their will. If the people of a particular State desire to have a certain form of administration, even though it might be monarchical, it is open to them to have it. The House will remember that even in the British Commonwealth of Nations today, Eire is a Republic and yet in many ways it is a member of the British Commonwealth. So, it is a conceivable thing. What will happen, I do not know, because that is partly for this House and partly for others to decide. There is no incongruity or impossibility about a certain definite form of administration in the States, provided there is complete freedom and responsible Government there and the people really are in charge. If monarchical figure-heads are approved by the people of the State, of a particular State, whether I like it or not, I certainly will not like to interfere. So I wish to make it clear that so far as this Resolution or Declaration is concerned, it does not interfere in any way with any future work that this Constituent Assembly may do, with any future negotiations that it may undertake. Only in one sense, if you like, it limits our work, if you call that a limitation, *i.e.*, we adhere to certain fundamental propositions which are laid down in the Declaration. Those fundamental propositions, I submit, are not controversial in any real sense of the word. Nobody challenges them in India and nobody ought to challenge them and if anybody does challenge, well, we accept that challenge and we hold our position. *(Applause)*.

Well, Sir, we are going to make a constitution for India and it is obvious that what we are going to do in India, is going to have a powerful effect on the rest of the world, not only

because a new free independent nation comes out into the arena of the world, but because of the very fact that India is such a country that by virtue, not only of her large size and population, but of her enormous resources and her ability to exploit those resources, she can immediately play an important and a vital part in the world affairs. Even today, on the verge of freedom as we are today India has begun to play an important part in world affairs. Therefore, it is right that the framers of our Constitution should always bear this larger international aspect in mind.

We approach the world in a friendly way. We want to make friends with all countries. We want to make friends, in spite of the long history of conflict in the past, with England also. The House knows that recently I paid a visit to England. I was reluctant to go for reasons which the House knows well. But I went because of a personal request from the Prime Minister of Great Britain. I went and I met with courtesy everywhere. And yet at this psychological moment in India's history when we wanted, when we hungered for messages of cheer, friendship and co-operation from all over the world, and more especially from England because of the past contact and conflict between us, unfortunately, I came back without any message of cheer, but with a large measure of disappointment. I hope that the new difficulties that have arisen, as every one knows, because of the recent statements made by the British Cabinet and by others in authority there, will not come in our way and that we shall yet succeed in going ahead with the co-operation of all of us here and those who have not come. It has been a blow to me, and it has hurt me that just at the moment when we are going to stride ahead, obstructions were placed in our way, new limitations were mentioned which had not been mentioned previously and new methods of procedure were suggested. I do not wish to challenge the *bona fides* of any person, but I wish to say that whatever the legal aspect of the thing might be, there are moments when law is a very feeble reed to rely upon, when we have to deal with a nation which is full of the passion for freedom. Most of us here during the past many years for a generation or more, have often taken part in the struggle for India's freedom. We have gone through the valley of the shadow. We are used to it and if necessity arises, we shall go through it again. (*Hear, hear*). Nevertheless, through all this long period, we have thought of the time when we shall have an opportunity, not merely to struggle, not merely to destroy, but to construct and create. And now, when it appeared that the time was coming for constructive effort in a free India to which we looked forward with joy, fresh difficulties are placed in our way at such a moment. It shows that, whatever force might be behind all this, people who are able and clever and very intelligent, somehow lack the imaginative daring which should accompany great offices. For, if you have to deal with any people, you have to understand them imaginatively; you should understand them emotionally; and of course, you have also to understand them intellectually. One of the unfortunate legacies of the past has been that there has been no imagination in the understanding of the Indian problem. People have often indulged in, or have presumed to give us advice, not realising that India, as she is constituted today, wants no one's advice and no one's imposition upon her. The only way to influence India is through friendship and co-operation and goodwill. Any attempt at imposition, the slightest trace of patronage, is resented and will be resented. (*Applause*). We have tried, I think honestly, in the last few months in spite of the difficulties that have faced us, to create an atmosphere of co-operation. We shall continue that endeavour. But I do very much fear that that atmosphere will be impaired if there is not sufficient and adequate response from others. Nevertheless, because we are bent on great tasks, I hope and trust, that we shall continue that endeavour and I do hope that if we continue, that we shall succeed. Where we have to deal with our own

countrymen, we must continue that endeavour even though in our opinion some countrymen of ours take a wrong path. For, after all, we have to work together in this country and we have inevitable to cooperate, if not today, tomorrow or the day after. Therefore, we have to avoid in the present anything which might create a new difficulty in the creation of the future which we are working for. Therefore, so far as our own countrymen are concerned, we must try our utmost to gain their co-operation in the largest measure. But, co-operation cannot mean the giving up of the fundamental ideals on which we have stood and on which we should stand. It is not co-operation to surrender everything that has given meaning to our lives. Apart from that, as I said, we seek the co-operation of England even at this stage which is full of suspicion of each other. We feel that if that co-operation is denied, that will be injurious to India, certainly to some extent, probably more so to England, and to some extent, to the world at large. We have just come out of the World War and people talk vaguely and rather wildly of new wars to come. At such a moment this New India is taking birth renascent, vital, fearless. Perhaps it is a suitable moment for this new birth to take place out of this turmoil in the world. But we have to be clear-eyed at this moment,—we, who have this heavy task of constitution-building. We have to think of this tremendous prospect of the present and the greater prospect of the future and not get lost in seeking gains for this group or that. In this Constituent Assembly we are functioning on a world stage and the eyes of the world are upon us and the eyes of our entire past are upon us. Our past is witness to what we are doing here and though the future is still unborn, the future too somehow looks at us, I think, and so, I would beg of this House to consider this Resolution in this mighty prospect of our past, of the turmoil of the present and of the great and unborn future that is going to take place soon. Sir, I beg to move. (*Prolongee Cheers*).

Mr Chairman: Shri Purshottam Das Tandon will second the Resolution.

Mr Hon'ble Shri Purshottam Das Tandon (United Provinces: General): *Mr Chairman, I fully support the Resolution moved by my brother Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru. Today's session of the Constituent Assembly is an historical occasion. After centuries such a meeting has once more been convened in our country. It recalls to our mind our glorious past when we were free and when assemblies were held at when the Pandits met to discuss important affairs of the country. It reminds us of the Assemblies of the age of Asoka. We have dim impressions of those days before our eyes. We are also reminded of Assemblies of other countries such as America, France and Russia. Our Constituent Assembly will be remembered with those others which met to frame the constitutions of other free nations. We have met here to frame a constitution which will show to the world that India is determined to live honourably not in isolation but as a part of the world. It will cooperate with other countries and help them in their difficulties and assist them in all those affairs which make for the general progress of the world. We hope that what we are doing today will be a historic event which will be counted among those great events which have helped in the progress of the world.

India has been under the sway of the British for the last 150 years. We do not wish to go into things against which we have continuously raised our voice even since the advent of the British Raj. We will not at present speak of the injuries done to India during this one and a half century. They not only deprived us of our freedom but also created disunity among us. We are not to go into these things today. We, however, cannot ignore the struggle and sacrifices of our

* English translation of Hindustani speech begins.

leaders. In the beginning our leaders demanded freedom by passing resolutions with explanations and submitting them to the Government. We were subjected openly to high-handedness and the Government were everywhere openly favouring the British. We earnestly appealed to our rulers to treat us with justice. Our leaders referred them to their high ideals, to the ideals of Burke and Mill. They were steeped in British ideals and they hoped that the British would do them justice and give them freedom. That time is now gone. Our experience has shown us that freedom cannot be had by requests and appeals and that drastic steps are unavoidable. The pages of our history show that new movements were started and open opposition began to be offered to the British. The movement of 1905–6 helped our country to ascend a few rungs higher on the ladder of progress. At that time our brave Bengali leaders and youths did acts which will be written in golden letters in our history. We forged ahead. Our national leader, Mahatma Gandhi, appeared in the field of politics and changed the methods of our struggle. He taught us new ways and we started afresh. British laws were not only openly defied but were also openly contravened without minding the dire consequences which were likely to follow such action. Thousands of our people broke the laws and went to jails. The pictures of those, who gave their lives or lingered for years in prisons, stand before our eyes. The more recent movement—the movement of 1942—is, in fact, the creator of this Assembly. This movement played a most important role in making the British Government call this Constituent Assembly. It opened a new field for our further advance. The eyes of the British Government were opened and the world was confronted with the fact that the British Government could no longer stay in India. Other countries did not help us openly. We have, however, to admit that in addition to the expression of our strength, which is the main thing which will carry us towards our goal, we were helped by powers which are today engaged in uniting the world. The world has seen, that oppression perpetrated in its remotest corner, has far-reaching repercussions involving the oppressor's country and its neighbours. This has been proved by the last two world wars. Now the great leaders of the world are thinking of the means to save the world from the ravages of a third world war. They desire to make it a paradise, to turn it into a place where no more wars will be fought, no more human blood will be shed, where no great distinction will exist between the rich and the poor, where everybody will get food and amenities, where people will be allowed to live according to their ideas, where every child has a right to be educated, where ideals will become noble and nobler and where spiritual ties will grow between the sons of man. Wise people are trying to bring out laws which will extricate the world from the slough in which it is at present wallowing and which will give equal rights to all countries. The time is swiftly changing and world forces are contributing towards these new ideas. We, too, living in this world cannot escape them. We ardently welcome the new forces which have always been the basis of our high hopes. It can be particularly said about India that its people have always considered the whole of mankind as one family and the whole world as one country. The best people among us never made any distinction between the people of the world. Many foreigners came to our country. We received them with open arms. We never practised the policy, which some countries have adopted against the people of our country. Our history shows that we welcomed all those who came from other countries and gave them whatever help they needed, assisting them to stay in our country. How did the people of England first come to this country? They found here protection and refuge. There have been quarrels and strifes; but on the whole our history shows that we have always protected human rights. We do not consider it right to divide brother from brother

nor do we make any distinction in their political rights. We have, no doubt, had and still have shortcomings; and we cannot ignore them.

Our past history urges us to go forward. We have to reach the point where we may place the ideal of equality not only before our own country but before the world at large. On this historical occasion it is quite natural that our thoughts dwell on our past history and to the events which occurred in our country. On our struggles, our sacrifices and help that we have received from other nations which have brought us here together and we must take strength from them. We have come here to frame a constitution which will give our country peace and tranquillity. We aim at giving equality to each and every inhabitant of our motherland.

The Resolution placed before you today has equality as its underlying theme. The different sections of the country have been given autonomy and India as a whole remains one with full sovereignty. We shall stand united in affairs which demand our unity. The one important thing in the Resolution is the recognition of India as a free country. Our country is one and yet we shall give full freedom to its various sections to have for themselves whatever administration they liked. The present division of our country into provinces may change. We shall do justice to all communities and give them full freedom in their social and religious affairs.

There is an amendment to the Resolution asking for a postponement of its consideration until such time as the Muslim League joins the Assembly. We should not ignore the fact that for every action there is a proper time. If we postpone the Resolution today, when will it again come before us? We are not certain as to when the League would come in. We have gathered together today; should we disperse without doing anything? Should we not have least an objective for our future proceedings? Should we go away after merely appointing a Procedure Committee? Our brethren advise us to postpone the consideration of the Resolution to some other time. If they wanted not to do anything in the absence of the Muslim League, why have they met here at all?

We do want the Muslim League to co-operate with us; but can we contribute to the present aims and aspirations of that body? We shall try our utmost not to hurt the cause of the Muslim League; and I point out to you that the Resolution takes note of this fact. There are many of us who are against-giving residuary powers to the provinces. Personally, I would oppose to grant of residuary powers to the provinces in the best interests of my country, especially in view of the conditions prevalent in the provinces owing to this Hindu-Muslim problem. We all know what has happened in Bengal and in other provinces. Residuary powers and political rights, which may conduce to unity and progress in the country, should lie with the Central or Federal Government. The Resolution, however, gives residuary powers to the provinces so that the Muslim League may not say that we have done in their absence what as we pleased. Moreover, the State Paper issued by the Cabinet Mission, which is the foundation of the Constituent Assembly, also said that the residuary powers should go to the provinces. We accepted it in the hope that this will enable the Muslim League to work with us. We went as far as we could to make the Muslim League co-operate with us; may, I would rather say, we went farther than was needed, because the Muslim League aims at certain objectives which are absolutely against our objectives and this will cause a lot of trouble in the future. For the sake of securing Muslim League's co-operation we have been accepting many things against our ideals. We should now put a stop to that and should not ignore our fundamental principles for the sake of coming to an agreement with the Muslim League. I am opposed to the postponement of the Resolution, and I am sure, the House realises the importance of this Resolution. Constituent Assemblies in other countries began with their objectives before them. If you postpone this Resolution, what

will the world think? When they hear of this Resolution they would think that India was going to be free; that the fight of 'Quit India' against the British started by Indians in 1942, was being won. This Resolution will lend a great importance to your cause of freedom, and its postponement, I think, is not expedient.

There are other amendments to the Resolution. It has been clearly pointed out in the Resolution that power shall entirely vest in the people. Some members suggest to substitute 'working people' for 'people'. I am opposed to this. The word 'people' means all the people. I am myself a servant of the farmers. To work with them is my highest glory. The term 'people' is comprehensive and contains all the people. It is, therefore, my opinion that no adjective should be attached to it. There are amendments asking for universal compulsory education and so on. These are petty matters. Times have changed. Provincial Governments have enacted laws to enforce these things. For the nonce, we should concentrate on larger issues. All these amendments are non-essential and should not be moved.

As I have already said we have got this opportunity of making a constitution after passing through many ordeals. We obtained some privileges in 1935. We continued the light until we came to 1942. Now, as a result of these struggles, we have gathered here to frame a constitution and we do not yet know what will be the result of our efforts. Our path is still full of obstructions. Our friends in London send us their advice. Sir Stafford Cripps, while speaking of certain principles, advises us to accept the formula that the majority should frame its own constitution, while the minority should also have the right to have safeguards against any obstructions from the majority. I am sorry to say, though Sir Stafford professes to help us, his real aim is to erect obstacles in our way. The history of our relations with the British show that Hindu-Muslim differences are purely a British creation.

The difference on which the British harp upon have been created by them. They were not in existence before their advent. Hindus and Muslims had a common civilization and lived amicably. Can the British say that the situation now obtained in India is not of their creation and is not backed by them? Those who are opposing us under the instigation of the British are our brethren and we certainly desire their co-operation; but in order to have them on our side we cannot sacrifice these basic principles to which we have been wedded till now and which go to make a nation. Sir Stafford warns us of civil war and advises us to co-operate with each other to avoid it. No patriot would like civil war and shedding the blood of his own countrymen. Congress has always tried to unite all the sections of the population to fight for the freedom of their country. Our leaders have never indulged in communal bickerings. Congress is the only body in which Hindus, Muslim, Parsees, Jains and Buddhists can unite. In politics it refuses to recognise any difference on account of religion. To say that such and such section be separated from the country on religious basis, is no religion but pure politics—which destroy the unity of a country. We ask Sir Stafford and other British leaders: "If a hundred years or, for that matter, twenty years ago, the right of separate elections were given to different sects of your country what sort of Government you would have had today" Again, we ask America: "if the right of separate elections was given to different communities and Christian sects of your country, would you have had the same form of government as you now have? Would you not have had continuous civil wars in your countries?" The possibility of civil war in our country has been created by the British Government. The British Government is playing the old game. The Cabinet's Statement shows the same mentality. The interpretation given by them stresses the point that the different groups of the Indian Federation shall have full power to frame whatever constitution they liked for them. They say, as they said before, that a province will have full

option to remain in a group or not; but at the same time they qualify this statement with conditions which preclude the possibility of a province using that right. You tell a province that it was free to remain in a group or not but at the same time you say that all the people of a group should join together to frame its constitution. The North-West Frontier Province will have to attach itself to the Punjab, Sind and Baluchistan, and Assam to Bengal. Their constitutions will be framed by 'B' & 'C' groups. The group consisting of Punjab, Sind and Baluchistan will frame constitutions for NWF Province, and Bengal for Assam. Is it honest? You say that a province has the right to go out of a group but you frame a constitution that precludes its going out of it. In the Cabinet Mission's Statement, it was clearly said that a province will have option to join a group. The meaning of the first part is that at the time of the formation of groups a province will have free option to be in the group or not. We understood it as such and so the Congress accepted it; but now it is said that a province has no option even at the time of formation of groups to remain out of its group nor does it have the right to frame its constitution. It will be framed by the delegates of the whole group. This means that we should accept the division of India and deliver the NWF Province and Assam into the hands of persons who openly assert that they are out to divide India into two parts. If civil war is unavoidable, let it come. We cannot be coerced to do a wrong thing by threats of civil war. It is quite possible that civil war may occur in a corner of India and we may have to fight the British, too. They threaten us with civil war; but the fact is that they are sowing the seeds of civil war among us. They wish that we should fight so that they may rule over us. I feel pained when I say these things. I have a great regard for the British people. They are far advanced in the field of politics and they are wise and freedom-loving. We have learnt many things from them. I have not a trace of hatred in my mind for them. I was happy that a new era had dawned in England, that the Government had passed to the Labour Party who would reverse the old policy. For the last hundred years the policy of the British Government had been one of selfishness and cunning towards countries, while in their own country they are very liberal and have a great regard for each other. For the benefit of their own people they consider it expedient to coerce and exploit other people. It was expected that with the advent of this new government and the defeat of the old Tories their policy would be entirely reversed and the foreign policy of England would be based on honesty but I am disappointed to see that some of the recent statements aimed only at creating a breach among the people of India.

I admit that the Congress had come into the Assembly by accepting the Cabinet Mission's Proposals but I want to point out that Constituent Assembly after meeting may adopt an altogether a different course. In France, people met on the invitation of King Louis. When they saw they could not do what they wanted to do, they began their own procedure. The King who had called them for granting him money, seeing their intentions, wanted to disperse them but they refused to disperse. Our Constituent Assembly has met on the invitation of the British Government but we are free to carry on the work as we please. Some of us were against the Congress participation in this Assembly. They were afraid of British tactics. The Congress, however, had full confidence in itself. My humble voice was also for coming into the Assembly. I believed in the power and determination of my colleagues. The occasion was not to be lost. If we could not succeed on account of obstructions from the British Government we shall at least show the world the sort of constitution we want. Our Chairman in his speech made many good points. I was elated to hear him say that we would not subject ourselves to limitations laid down by the British Government.

In this House we cannot accept the British Government's Proposals to divide India into sections and to give the right of framing constitution for provinces into the hands of persons who are bent upon dividing India. I do not like to say these things but I feel it my duty, to say that the British Government shows a lack of honesty in assertions which it makes on behalf of the Muslim League.

Somebody has rightly said that the League was the British Government's Front (*morcha*). Pandit Nehru said the other day in the Congress that the League members who had come in the Interim Government were acting as the King's Party. The fact is that the League is being duped by the British Government. They are our countrymen and our brethren and we are always prepared to come to an agreement with them. Today they British are using them as their *morcha* from behind which they are throwing arrows upon us. We know the British arrows and we have to protect ourselves. In the Constitution that we would frame, we would try to save ourselves from these arrows. In doing so, if we have to fight the British and their proteges, we are prepared to do so. We are sure we will surmount all obstacles. It is the time of our trial. When success comes nearer a host of difficulties crop up. When *yogis* begin to ascend higher in their *yogas* they are beset by apparitions, spectres and evil spirits. They threaten them and try to dupe them. We are nearer the success and many evil spirits have arisen to make us deviate from our purpose. It is our duty that we should neither fall to their machinations or should we feel afraid of them.

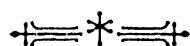
In framing the Constitution we should remember that whatever plans of progress we make, we should never yield to the proposal of dividing India. India should remain one. Thus, protecting our past civilization, we may proceed forward and take the greatest part in bringing peace to the world.

Mr Chairman: The Resolution has been moved and seconded. I have received notice of a large number of amendments. I think I have got more than 40 amendments already before me and therefore I do not think it necessary to give any more time for giving notice of more amendments. I think all who wanted to put in amendments have already done so, taking into consideration the number of amendments.

It is now 1 o'clock and I think we may rise. But before we rise, I desire to point out to the House that from the next day, I may have to do the unpleasant duty of imposing some sort of time-limit on the speakers. This being the first day, I did not like to interfere and I allowed the speakers to have full time.

Tomorrow being Saturday, I would not like that the House should meet. It is not as if I am laying down a rule that we shall not meet on Saturdays. We are not meeting this Saturday for the reason that we are meeting in the Rules Committee and I want the Committee's work to be finished as soon as possible. So, to allow the Members of the Committee full time tomorrow, we are not meeting here. We meet on Monday, and on Monday we shall meet in the afternoon from 3 o'clock, not in the morning. The House stands adjourned to 3 o'clock on Monday.

The Assembly then adjourned till 8 p.m. on Monday, the 16th December, 1946.



2. Monday, the 16th December, 1946

The Constituent Assembly of India met in the Constitution Hall, New Delhi, at Three of the Clock (afternoon). Mr Chairman (The Hon'ble Dr Rajendra Prasad) in the Chair.

RESOLUTION RE: AIMS AND OBJECTS—contd.

Mr Chairman: We proceed now with the further discussion of the Resolution moved on the 13 December. The number of amendments is very large but I understand that some of them will not be moved. I call upon Dr Jayakar to move his amendment.

The Right Hon'ble Dr M.R. Jayakar (Bombay: General): Mr Chairman and friends, before I move my amendment I would like to say a few words to tender my congratulations for the excellent speech which Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru made in moving the Resolution. Its lucidity, modesty and gravity were very impressive and as I listened to it, my thoughts went back to the old days when, a few yards from here, under the guidance and the leadership of his distinguished father, we carried on legislative fights which, viewed back from the dignity of the present Assembly now, seem to be so diminutive and unreal. I always considered Pandit Motilal Nehru a very fortunate man in the sense that he had two children, each of whom has become very distinguished after his death—*(cheers)*—Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru, the guiding soul of the present Assembly, and that distinguished lady whom we are waiting to receive after her achievement at the UNO at New York.

Before I read the terms of my amendment to the Resolution I would like to remove a few misunderstandings which have arisen about its purposes. Many distinguished and loving friends have come and said to me, in all earnestness, that I ought not to move this Resolution. I would like to remove all misunderstandings about my reasons in moving this amendment. It was said that it will divide this Assembly, which is bad tactics at the present moment. When you hear my speech I hope you will agree that my motion is not intended to nor is it likely to cause a division in the sense these friends meant. Some others said that I was deliberately appeasing the Muslim League. I see no harm in that, if it is necessary for the purpose of making successful the work of this Assembly. One friend went the length of saying that I am supporting Mr Churchill of all people in the world, the person whom I tried to expose in my cross-examination at the Round Table Conference Committee. There is no possibility of my supporting Mr Churchill by any means. Some friends touched me to the quick by saying that all my life having been a champion of Hindu interests, I now propose to support and placate the Muslims. In reply I said that I saw no conflict between the two. Because I support Hindu interests it does not mean that I should trample on what I consider the just rights of another community. My real purpose in moving this amendment is to save the work of this Assembly from frustration. I fear that all the work we shall be doing here is in imminent danger of being rendered infructuous. I am anxious that the work of this Constituent Assembly should not be made futile and in-effective by our neglecting one or two difficulties which lie in our way. One friend said: 'You have been elected on the Congress ticket'. I recognise the generosity of that step and when the invitation came I accepted it at some personal inconvenience; but if the obligation of that step means that my services, which you have a right to demand at every step, must always take the form of popularity, then I am afraid it is not possible. I am here to render you as much co-operation and service as I can, but I cannot guarantee that such services will always be, in a form, popular with you. It may sometimes assume a painful form *e.g.* of asking your attention to some pitfalls and difficulties in the way.

The points which I make are twofold, Sir. One is a purely legal point and after putting it in brief, I shall leave it to you, Sir, in the Chair and to the Constitutional Adviser whom I have known for the last 10 years as a man of great constitutional knowledge, rectitude of behaviour and stern independence. It is an advantage, if I may say so, from my place here that we have got the assistance of a person like Sir B.N. Rau and I have no doubt that the point, which I am putting before you, Sir, today will receive his best attention. I do not want to raise this as a point of order but I am now raising it as indicating a legal difficulty in our way. I have no doubt that in the time which you have at your disposal you will consider it very carefully and give such decision on it as you choose. The point which I purpose to raise is that in this preliminary meeting of the Constituent Assembly at this stage no question like laying down the fundamentals of the Constitution can be considered. That the Resolution is intended to lay down the fundamentals of the Constitution, even Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru has admitted. It is a very vital resolution and it lays down the essentials of the next Constitution. If you examine it, a cursory glance will reveal to you that the several things which are mentioned here, fundamentals of the Constitution. For instance, it speaks of a Republic; of a Union; it talks of present boundaries, and the status of Provincial Authorities; Residuary powers, all powers being derived from the people, minorities rights, fundamental rights—all these can be accurately described as fundamentals of the Constitution. My point is that within the limits of the power which the Cabinet Mission's statement of 16th May accord to this preliminary meeting, it cannot validly lay down any fundamentals, however sketchy they may be, of the Constitution. That must wait until after we meet in the Sections and the Provincial Constitutions have been prepared. At that stage, the two other partners, the Muslim League and Indian States, are expected to be present. At our present preliminary meeting our work is cut out and limited by express terms which I shall presently read out to you and those express terms do not include the preparation or acceptance of the fundamentals of the Constitution which must await until we reach that stage which I have just mentioned. We are no doubt a sovereign body as you, Sir, very rightly remarked but we are sovereign within the limitations of the Paper by which we have been created. We cannot go outside those limitations except by agreement and the two other parties being absent, no agreement can be thought of. Therefore, we are bound by those limitations. Of course, if the idea of some people is to ignore those limitations altogether and convert this Constituent Assembly into a force for gaining political power, irrespective of the limitations of this Paper, to seize power and thereby create a revolution in the country, that is outside the present plan, and I have nothing to say about it. But as the Congress has accepted this Paper in its entirety, it is bound by the limitations of that Paper. If you will just permit me a few minutes to read to you the relevant parts of the Paper ...

Mr Kiran Sankar Roy (Bengal: General): Mr Chairman, on a point of order. I would like to know whether Dr Jayakar is raising a point of order or moving his amendment. If he is raising a point of order, we feel, Sir, that that point of order should be disposed of first before he can proceed to move his amendment.

Mr Chairman: I think Dr Jayakar has said that he is not raising a point of order, but he is pointing out the difficulties in the way of accepting this Resolution, and I take it that he is proceeding in that way. As I understand it, he is not raising a point of order.

Dr B. Pattabhi Sitaramayya (Madras: General): May I take it, Sir, that this is a motion for adjournment of the consideration of the Resolution, as I make it out to be?

Mr Chairman: I don't think it is a motion for adjournment either. He wants the Resolution to be discussed, but wishes to place before the House his own point of view with regard to the advisability or otherwise of the Resolution at this stage, and in doing so he points out certain difficulties in the way of accepting it.

Dr B. Pattabhi Sitaramayya: May I respectfully suggest that he does not want us to proceed with the consideration of this subject. It is clear from the wording of his amendment. I invite your attention to the wording, Sir.

Shri Mohan Lal Saksena (United Provinces: General): On a point of order. Under the Assembly rules, the mover of an amendment has to move his amendment before he makes his speech. I would suggest that Dr Jayakar should be asked to move his amendment before he goes on to make his speech.

The Right Hon'ble Dr M.R. Jayakar: Well, I will read the amendment. I wanted to save your time by a few minutes. This is the amendment:

"This Assembly declares its firm and solemn resolve that the Constitution to be prepared by this Assembly for the future governance of India shall be for a free and democratic Sovereign State but with a view to securing, in the shaping of such a constitution the co-operation of the Muslim League and the Indian States, and thereby intensifying the firmness of this resolve, this Assembly postpones the further consideration of this question to a later date to enable the representatives of these two bodies to participate, if they so choose in the deliberations of this Assembly."

In substance, my amendment means that the further consideration of this Resolution should be postponed to a later stage, the stage of Union constitution-making at which, I take it, the Indian States and the Muslim League are expected to be present. I am not raising this as a point of order, but I am raising it as a difficulty which we have to get over before we proceed to a consideration of this question, and this is an argument for the purpose of postponing the further discussion of this question. I am merely pointing out the legal difficulty in the way of this Constituent Assembly adopting this Resolution at this preliminary meeting. Therefore the point I am making is that our power to transact our business at this stage of a preliminary meeting is limited. It is limited by express words and those limitations being accepted by us, this Assembly has no power at this stage to adopt any fundamentals of the Constitution. I would invite your attention, Sir, to a few paragraphs in the State Paper. I shall begin with Clause 19. Sub-clause (i) mentions the way the representatives of the several bodies are to be elected. Then follows Sections 'A', 'B' and 'C'. Then comes the note about Chief Commissioners' Provinces, etc. I shall leave that out. Then comes sub-clause (ii) which relates to the States. Then comes sub-clause (iii) which says that "representatives thus chosen", *i.e.*, the Hindus, Muslims and the Negotiating Committee for the States, (I will leave the Negotiating Committee out for the moment) "shall meet at New Delhi as soon as possible". We have met. Then comes the preliminary meeting which is the meeting we are holding today. That it is a preliminary meeting cannot be disputed. In this connection, I may ask your attention to the letter of invitation, dated the 20th of November, which you received from the Viceroy to attend here this meeting. There it is described as the "first" meeting. Therefore this is the preliminary meeting mentioned in sub-clause (iv). Then let us see what this preliminary meeting is entitled to do:

"A preliminary meeting will be held at which (1) the general order of business will be decided (2) a Chairman and other Officers elected and (3) an Advisory Committee (see paragraph 20 below) on rights of citizens, minorities and tribal and excluded areas set up ..."

I understand that this is soon going to be done. Apart from this, there is not a word there about passing either the essentials or the fundamentals or even a sketchy outline of any constitution.

Sri K. Santhanam (Madras: General): On a point of order Sir. If the Hon'ble Member's argument is correct, the first sentence of his amendment is as much not within the power of this Assembly as the original Resolution by Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru.

The Right Hon'ble Dr M.R. Jayakar: I think having regard to the difficulty which one finds in hearing from a distance, it will be more convenient if after my speech is ended all objections to it may be raised by members walking up to this rostrum. It will be more easy to hear them at that time and nothing is going to happen in the meantime. I am not going to engage you very long. Whatever objections you may have to urge against my speech, they may be presented by members coming here and I shall then reply to them if I am given a chance, instead of members now interfering. Therefore, my submission, right or wrong, is that the powers of the preliminary meeting are limited to these steps.

Mr Chairman: Order, order. What is your point of order, Mr Santhanam?

Sri K. Santhanam: My point of order is that if the Hon'ble Member's argument is correct, then the first sentence of his amendment is outside the powers of this meeting of the Assembly.

Mr Chairman: Mr Santhanam says that the first sentence of your amendment (turning to Dr Jayakar), according to your own argument, it out of order.

The Right Hon'ble Dr M.R. Jayakar: If that is your view, it can be deleted. I am willing to do so. I do not want to waste the time of the House in arguing against this view. I am prepared to delete that portion if necessary and let the remaining portion stand. It is sufficient for my present purpose.

Dr B. Pattabhi Sitaramayya: That is why I submitted at the very outset that this was a motion for postponing the consideration of the Resolution.

Mr Chairman: That really creates a difficulty—it is the first part of your amendment which makes it an amendment by bringing it within the four corners of the Statement. If your argument is correct, and if that is omitted, then the result is that your amendment becomes only a motion for adjournment.

The Right Hon'ble Dr M.R. Jayakar: Supposing for a moment that you treat this as a motion for adjournment, can I not move it at this stage? It is a motion which should be taken up before any other amendment on merits is considered. Therefore, even supposing you treat it as a motion for adjournment, I can urge it now.

Mr Chairman: I seek the assistance of Members of this House on this point. The difficulty is that, if Dr Jayakar's argument is correct on the legal point the Resolution moved by Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru is out of order. This question should have been raised at the time when the Resolution was moved. But at this stage I do not think that that point of order can be raised. Therefore, we take both the amendment and the Resolution as being in order, and we proceed with the discussion.

The Right Hon'ble Dr M.R. Jayakar: Then can I urge this as a legal question?

Mr Chairman: I think this legal question would not arise. You put it on merits.

The Right Hon'ble Dr M.R. Jayakar: I was mentioning to you, Sir, that at this stage the fundamentals of the Constitution cannot be considered or adopted. I will read out to you a few clauses more. Clause (v) says:

"These sections shall proceed to settle provincial constitutions for the provinces included in each section."

I understand these will meet in March or April next. I leave the other irrelevant portions. Then comes clause (vi)—which relates to the stage at which questions relating to the Constitution can be settled.

"The representatives of the Sections and the Indian States shall reasonable for the purpose of settling the Union Constitution."

That is the stage at which the fundamentals of the Constitution can be settled, because at that stage the States and the Congress and the Muslim League will all be present. This is so because the Scheme considers it necessary that all these three elements should have a chance of having their say on matters relating to the Constitution. That stage has not been reached yet. Therefore, my submission is, that this question at the present time cannot be considered or finally decided. I am however suggesting a way out of the difficulty if you like to adopt it.

Mr N.V. Gadgil (Bombay: General): There is no prohibition in clause (iv).

The Right Hon'ble Dr M.R. Jayakar: That is implied there. If you take clauses (iv) and (vi), the meaning is clear that the preliminary meeting shall be concerned only with a few things and the settling of the constitution shall be postponed till we come to clause (vi). Otherwise clause (vi) becomes absolutely redundant and is in conflict. Therefore, taking the two clauses together, it is clear that what is intended to be done at the stage of clause (iv), is clearly and expressly mentioned in that clause. All that concerns the Union constitution either by way of an elaborate settlement or a sketchy outline of the fundamentals—all that must wait till the stage in clause (vi) is reached.

Now I come to clause (vii) which throws more light on this question. It provides that if any major communal issue arises, it will be dealt with as provided in that clause. There is no party here who is likely to raise the question of a major communal issue. Therefore, if you look back on clause (vii), its sense is clear in the way I have mentioned. This is my brief submission on the law point.

Apart from this legal point I want to urge before you a few considerations of practical expediency for postponing the consideration of this question to a later stage. As a way out of this difficulty I suggest that the Resolution, having been discussed during all this time and the object of public ventilation being served, this Assembly should not vote on it for the present but defer its consideration to the stage mentioned in clause (vi) so that when deliberating on it afresh at that time with the view of taking a final vote on it, there may be present here, to take part in such deliberations, the representatives of the two parties who are absent here now. I suggest this as an alternative course, to meet the difficulty.

Mr R.K. Sidhwa (CP and Berar: General): I rise to a point of order, Sir. Dr Jayakar's amendment says:

"... this Assembly postpones the further consideration of this question to a later date, to enable the representatives of these two bodies (Indian States and Muslim League) to participate, if they so choose, in the deliberations of this Assembly."

He has quoted clause (ii) of paragraph 19. That clause says:

“It is the intention that the States would be given in the final Constituent Assembly appropriate representation ...”

That stage has not been reached and therefore, raising an objection that the Indian States are not represented here now cannot hold water. Again, if you further see ...

Mr Chairman: That is not a point of order. That is an argument against what has been said.

The Right Hon'ble Dr M.R. Jayakar: May I proceed, Sir?

Mr Chairman: Yes.

The Right Hon'ble Dr M.R. Jayakar: The plea which I am urging is this: This Constituent Assembly, as it is formed today, is not complete. Two persons are absent: The Indian States for no fault of theirs, because they cannot come in at this stage; that is the true position. The Negotiating Committee has been formed by the States, but we have not yet formed our Negotiating Committee. When we have done so, the two Committees will meet; that is the stage at which the States can come in according to the terms of this Document. As for the Muslim League, the position is different and the difference is very great.

The Muslim League has recently obtained three or four important concessions. Whether it is by superior strategy or any other means, it is not for me to say here. They have got three or four important points in their favour.

There are two points for interpretation, one is about voting and the other is about grouping into Sections. I understand that that question is going to be referred to the Federal Court. As an *ex-Judge* of the Federal court and a sitting Member of the Superior Tribunal, namely the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, I recognise the necessity of not saying anything more about the proposed reference to the Federal Court or whether it is right and proper. I will only say that I wish you good luck. I congratulate you that you will have on your side the services of one of the ablest constitutional lawyers you can engage for your purpose, namely, my friend, Sir Alladi Krishnaswami Ayyar. Beyond that I do not want to say anything about the reference to Federal Court. But it is clear that, although you may go to the Federal Court for getting the interpretation, *viz.*, relating to grouping and voting, you cannot go to the Federal Court on the last point gained by the Muslim League, *viz.*, the provision that if a large section of people is not represented at the constitution-making, His Majesty's Government will not be willing to force such a constitution upon unwilling parts of the country. That is not a question of interpretation. It is a fresh concession which has been given to the Muslim League by way of addition to the Statement of May 16. I do not think that you can refer that point to the Federal Court. It is a substantive point which has been conceded to the Muslim League, *viz.*, that contrary to the Statement of Mr Attlee, the Prime Minister, on 15th March this year, in the House of Commons, to the effect that though minorities will be protected, they will not be allowed to veto the progress of the majority. That was the position enunciated by no less a person than the Prime Minister in March 1946. That is gone. Now the position is very different indeed.

The Hon'ble Sardar Vallabhbhai J. Patel (Bombay: General): May I know, Sir, if the Right Hon'ble Gentlemen is interpreting here the policy laid down by His Majesty's Government? All those so-called concessions which the Right Hon'ble Gentleman is referring to are in addition to or over and above the Statement made in the White Paper. We have not accepted them and this House is not going to accept any addition, or alteration in the Document of May 16th. (Applause).

The Right Hon'ble Dr M.R. Jayakar: I am only pointing out the difficulties in your way. I am not asking you to admit any addition. I am pointing out the advantage, freshly found by the Muslim League, which creates a great difficulty in your way and the necessity for holding up matters until the Muslim League comes in. On that point, my remarks are quite relevant. If the Hon'ble Sardar Patel thinks that any addition like this will be rejected, by the Congress, they are welcome to do so.

Now, Sir, what does it mean? What follows from it if a community like the Muslim community is not represented here at the constitution-making. The words "unwilling parts of the country" have also been interpreted by Sir Stafford Cripps. He says that the words mean any part of India where the Muslims are in a majority. On such parts, if they are unwilling, the constitution which you may frame in the absence of the Muslim community, will not be forced. The words used are 'unwilling parts of the country'. Whether any other community can take advantage of this provision, I do not know. That is a matter that may have to be cleared up. But this much is certain, and it was so expressly stated by Sir Stafford Cripps in the debate in the House of Commons. That those parts of the country where Muslims are in a majority, will not be forced to accept a constitution at the making of which they are not represented. Mark the words: "they are not represented", *i.e.*, they are not present.

Now, this particular addition has been hailed with delight in England by certain schools of thought. Mr Churchill calls it 'an important milestone in the long journey'. Whether it is an important milestone or a dangerous milestone, we are not concerned with. The fact is there that the Muslims have secured this right at the present moment.

So, the position is this that, if they choose to remain absent from your deliberations for whatever reasons, they can make your work futile and fruitless. All your efforts will fail to bind them. Whatever constitution you may frame in their absence here will be binding upon perhaps willing portion like Section 'A'; I am very doubtful whether it will affect Sections 'B' and 'C'. The result is that whatever you may do in the way of providing a constitution for the whole of India here and now, as this Resolution proposes, if you accept it today in the absence of the Muslim League, your effort is not going to bind the Muslim League at all. That raises the question whether it will not be wise, merely as a means of saving your trouble and labour, to postpone to a future date, the further consideration of these constitutional points. To put it at the lowest, it will save labour.

If you look at the constitution suggested in the Resolution there are points in it with which the States and the Muslims are most intimately concerned. You speak of a Republic. I personally have no objection.

Dr Suresh Chandra Banerjee (Bengal: General): On a point of information, Sir. If the Muslims do not come at all, how long are we to wait? How long are we to sit quiet? They could have come in. They have not come of their own accord.

The Right Hon'ble Dr M.R. Jayakar: That is not a point of order.

Dr Suresh Chandra Banerjee: That information should be given by Dr Jayakar.

The Chairman: That is an argument which the Hon'ble Member may advance when his turn comes.

The Right Hon'ble Dr M.R. Jayakar: If the Hon'ble member had not interrupted me and had waited for a little while, I would have given an answer to the query.

Sir, the result is that merely by adopting the simple device of not being present here, the Muslim League can make the whole of your work useless. What does it mean? It means further that if the Muslim League does not come in, the States may not come in. They have made it clear more than once. And, in the House of Commons, it was stated clearly that the States might not deal with a Constituent Assembly which is composed of one party only. Therefore it is clear that if the Muslim League choose to remain absent, and we provoke it by our action to do so, the States may not come in.

The Hon'ble Pandit Govind Ballabh Pant (United Provinces: General): How is it the Right Hon'ble Member said that it was made abundantly clear in the House of Commons that if the Muslim League did not come in, the State will not join the Constituent Assembly?

The Right Hon'ble Dr M.R. Jayakar: Yes.

The Hon'ble Pandit Govind Ballabh Pant: I differ from the Right Hon'ble Gentleman in the interpretation of what was said there.

The Right Hon'ble Dr M.R. Jayakar: I place my interpretation on that, and the Hon'ble Member is free to place his interpretation on that.

The Hon'ble Pandit Govind Ballabh Pant: Dr Jayakar has no right to represent the States view here unless the States representatives or the Negotiating Committee make the position clear.

The Right Hon'ble Dr M.R. Jayakar: I am not stating the view of the States. I am stating what was stated in the House of Commons. If the Muslim League does not come in, the State may not come in. The States may not conceivably like to deal with a Constituent Assembly which is composed of one party only. If so what will be the result? (Interruption).

Mr Chairman: I think it will be better if we allow Dr Jayakar to continue.

The Right Hon'ble Dr M.R. Jayakar: Won't you allow me to go my own way for about 20 minutes? The whole of this week, I understand, is going to be at your disposal to pick holes in my speech.

The Hon'ble Pandit Govind Ballabh Pant: We will have something more to do than pick holes in your speech.

The Right Hon'ble Dr M.R. Jayakar: If the Muslim does not come in, then in all probability the States will not come in. What happens? Probably you will frame a constitution for Section 'A'. Perhaps you will be framing a constitution for a Union Centre for the Provinces in Section 'A'. You may like to have a Union Centre for those Provinces. It is certain however that you will be unable to frame a constitution for section 'B', the majority there being of the Muslim League. The result will be that there will have to be another Constituent Assembly, as Mr Jinnah is wanting for the purpose of framing a constitution for Sections 'B' and 'C'. Whether the minorities in those Sections can take advantage of the formula that unwilling parts will not be forced to accept the constitution, whether the Hindus and the Sikhs of the Punjab and the Hindus of Bengal and Assam can take advantage of the provision, I do not know. I can express no opinion on that. It may be that they will be able to take advantage of the principle of this dictum and say, "We had no hand in framing this constitution. Therefore that constitution should not be forced on us." That is a possibility. This much however is certain that our endeavour to frame a constitution for the whole of India as a Union will be defeated. The possible result of that will be that there may be one constitution for Hindus and another

constitution for the Muslims and if this happens, there will be a third constitution for the States, and instead of having one United India, we may be forced to the necessity of having a Hindustan constitution, a mild, abbreviated, or qualified Pakistan constitution and a Rajasthan constitution also. Your Union at the Centre will go. It will not be established. At present you have got at least this advantage that even though some form of Pakistan will be established in Sections 'B' and 'C', you have got a Union Centre, attenuated though it may be. Therefore the obvious necessity of the present occasion is that every effort ought to be made to invite the Muslims to come in here, and we should not make it more difficult. This is mainly because our work has to bear fruit. I admire in this behalf the sentiments expressed by Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru in moving the Resolution. He said in effect that we seek the co-operation of the Muslims. We must continue to make an endeavour, though, in the past, our efforts did not evoke enough response. I do not think that my plea can be put in better words. It is clear that you cannot do any constitution-making at least till April next. Therefore, where is the harm in deferring the further consideration of this Resolution for a few weeks more until at least you know that the Muslim League, by a formal resolution, has declared its intent on not to come in. They must declare their intention during the next few weeks. I read the statement of Sir Stafford Cripps in the parliamentary debate that it was understood that, when Mr Jinnah went back to India, if the Congress accepted the Statement of 6th December he would call a meeting of the Muslim League and decide on this question. That was a statement made on the floor of the House of Commons. After you know that by an authoritative formal resolution, the Muslim League has decided not to come in, you can then decide what to do. One hurdle would have been crossed; but I am not disposed to take it for granted that the Muslim League will not come in. It is not practical politics. A friend came to me this morning and said: "until yesterday, Dr Jayakar, I was entirely in favour of your Resolution, but Mr Jinnah's Press Conference in London has made the whole difference." I said, "What difference has it made?" He said, "Mr Jinnah has not stated that he will never come into this Constituent Assembly." I do not think that Mr Jinnah has made such a statement, and even if so made, I am not disposed to take the statement as the final, authoritative, deliberate, formal decision of the Muslim League. What is the harm in postponing the final vote on this Resolution till then? You are not in any event going to do anything substantial at least until the 20th January, that is four weeks from now. At least till then you should keep the way clear for the Muslim League to come in and take part in the proceedings. One answer to my plea is, "We are not doing anything to which the Muslim League can legitimately object." That does not touch my point. It is not a question of doing anything to which the Muslim League does not object. It is a question of giving it the right and the opportunity to be present here during the deliberations on this Resolution. That is what I am trying to obtain. Then it is said that there is nothing here which is contrary to the White Paper. That again does not touch my point. My object is to save the work of this Constituent Assembly from becoming infructuous. Wait, go slow. A few weeks are not going to make any substantial difference. It is not going to cause any great harm if you instead of passing this Resolution in the present session, deferred it to a few weeks hence. The fact is that you are going to adjourn till the end of January but you will not do so, not in compliance with the terms of my amendment. That is a significant fact. Why don't you wait for a little while and thereby make it less difficult for the Muslim League to come in. I am told what is the grievance. The Muslim League can come in later after we pass this Resolution. My reply is that it is their right to be present at these deliberations, and to make their contribution. Please remember that the Muslim League has already raised the grievance in his Press Conference in London. "I

do not want to be presented with a *fait accompli*," he complains. Will you now give him the opportunity of justly complaining that an important and vital question like laying down the fundamentals of the Constitution, has been finished in his absence, knowing that he was likely to come in? Are you not thereby making it more difficult for the Muslim League to come into the Constituent Assembly? What I am urging on your attention is this: that as you are doing a good deal of what my amendment wants you to do, what is the harm in accepting my amendment? I say, "go slow". What is the harm? Do you wish to say we shall go slow, but not in compliance with your amendment, *i.e.*, not for enabling the Muslim League to come in? That is hardly dignified. It looks so petty. It will be a graceful gesture, if you say 'we are postponing because we wish to give the Muslim League a chance of coming in so that this question may be discussed and finally adopted in their presence. This is the position, Sir, as Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru said, there is great need of the spirit of co-operation and accommodation at the present time having regard to the great difficulties through which we are passing. I have explained to you the difficulties and also the danger of this work becoming fruitless. In the light of that possibility and danger, I would urge, with all the words at my command, that the words of Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru ought to be translated into action. We seek Muslim co-operation, we go out of our way to seek it by postponing this Resolution. Sir, miles away from here is working that solitary figure, whose steps we claim to follow, the great Mahatma;—alone, stinted of sleep, stinted in food and stinted in health, grieved and solitary, he is trying to win the Muslim community by friendly co-operation and goodwill. Why can we not follow his example here? Sir, if I may say so, I am glad you are here to preside over the deliberations of this august Assembly, and from what I have known of you all these years, your great capacity for goodwill, your gentleness, your spirit of accommodation and your ability to see the opposite point of view, having regard to all these virtues, I think, it is very significant that at this time you are in the Chair and my effort is for establishing that atmosphere in which your efforts, with your particular gift of fascination, can best thrive. Therefore, I am making this plea that we should defer the consideration of this Resolution so that you will have the chance of obtaining Muslim co-operation. But it is said we will alter the Resolution when they come in. It is neither wise nor easy to alter deliberately-adopted the Resolution. The substance of my plea is to allow the Muslim League an opportunity to take part in the deliberations, sit by your side, make speeches not *ex post facto*, but before and during the passing of this Resolution. That is real co-operation and not asking them after they want to come in and accept what you have done.

From this view I fear many of you will differ. I was warned, "you are making yourself extremely unpopular." But I said to my friend, "unpopularity has been my guerdon since my childhood. I have passed through many unpopuliarities. When I helped to start the Swaraj Party, I was unpopular. When I started the Responsive Co-operation Party, I was unpopular. When I went to the Indian Round Table Conference in London, I was unpopular. When I joined in passing the 1935 Act, I was unpopular—that piece of legislation which you, very thoughtlessly in my opinion, turned down. Having done that you are now borrowing, out of that detested legislation, for important features, a Federation, an attenuated Centre, Autonomous Provinces and lastly residuary powers in Province. May I say, however, that my unpopuliarities have with lapse of time, swollen into bulky majorities. Unpopularity does not therefore frighten me at my age and with my experience. My duty is to tell you that the course you propose to adopt is wrong, it is illegal, it is premature, it is disastrous, it is dangerous. It will lead you into trouble. As I am elected on your ticket, I am bound to tell you frankly that there is danger ahead,

danger of frustration, danger of discord and division, which it is our duty to avoid. Sir, I have done.

The Hon'ble Mr Shri Krishna Sinha (Bihar: General): Mr Chairman, Sir, I stand here to support the Resolution as originally moved by Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru: In my opinion, it is really unfortunate that a resolution of such a sacred nature should have been subjected to amendments. I purposely call it sacred because by this Resolution an attempt is made to give expression to that aspiration to be free which has stirred us for the last several years.

Sir, the Resolution, if carefully analysed, comes to this. It gives a picture of the vision of future India. That India of the future is to be a democratic and decentralised republic in which the ultimate sovereignty is to lie with the people and in which fundamental rights are to be safeguarded to minorities inhabiting this land. Now, Sir, these three fundamental features that I call this resolution sacred. I shall try to be brief. Yet I cannot refrain from reminding this House that we are all assembled here in assertion of a right, a cherished and valuable right which mankind has achieved for itself after undergoing untold suffering and sacrifices. Some sort of political structure is required in every society to make life therein possible. A careful analysis of the process of evolution of States in this world shows that the nature of these has changed with the change in the conception of life. Sir, I was not a little surprised to hear just now from an Hon'ble Member of a House which has assembled in assertion of the constituent power of the people that there can be honest difference of opinion regarding the place where political sovereignty resided in society. Certainly Sir, not long ago the world did not believe that all individuals composing society had an equal right to liberty and happiness. Society was composed of classes and the individual had no place in society. The place of man in society was determined by the class to which he belonged and so there was no individual liberty to be safeguarded. Poverty was not thought to be a disease which society must get rid of. Some of the great thinkers of the 18th century France, were of the opinion that the presence of poverty in society was necessary for the proper production of wealth. In such a society, Sir, there could be no place for the principle of the sovereignty of the people. Sovereignty belonged to the King whose privilege it was to rule. The people existed merely to pay the taxes demanded of them by the King and obey the laws enacted by him. But with the lapse of time, the conception of society and life change. Men came to believe that every individual has an equal right to liberty and happiness. With this change in the conception of life, a change in the structure of the State became necessary. But those who held political power were reluctant to part with it and effect a change in the political structure. There was thus a clash between the ideologies which swayed the people and those which swayed the men in power. There were revolutions on both sides of the Atlantic at the end of the 18th century in which the principle that the power belonged to the people was vindicated. Even after this, there were rulers who would not recognise this principle and so another blood-bath in the shape of a revolution had to be gone through to get finally sanctioned the principle that political power belonged to the people. It was to achieve this constitute power that we in this country have been fighting British Imperialism for the last several years. It is this which moved this country from one end to the other in 1921 and made its millions rally under the banner of revolt raised by Mahatma Gandhi in that year. It was for asserting this basic right of a people that hundreds mounted the scaffold, thousands faced bullets and men in lakhs swarmed the jails. There was a wide gap between the political ideals on which the Government of India was based and the political ideology which swayed the people, and the result has been strife, So, Sir, we are not here in this Assembly because the

British Government in a fit of generosity have thought it proper to ask us to take over power. I have been in a position from where I can form my own opinion as to whether there is any sincerity behind all this talk of peaceful transfer of power. We are here because we have succeeded in compelling those who still entertain the dream of governing India according to the political ideals embodied in the Government of India Act, to give up that dream. We have succeeded because of that spirit of rebellion which spread all over the country in 1942. It is as a result of the 1942 rebellion that we are here in this Constituent Assembly. Gathered together in such an Assembly it should be our first duty to draw up a picture of future free India and present it to our people. The Right Hon'ble Dr Jayakar who spoke eloquently, has drawn a picture of the difficulties which the absence of our Muslim League friends will cause. I do not think that we required a speech from a man of the eminence of Dr Jayakar to point out these difficulties. We know what those difficulties are. If I understood him aright, however, he did not give us a counsel of despair. He has actually advised us to go on with our work if our friends of the Muslim League do not come in after some time.

Sir, our leader, the Hon'ble Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru, has made it quite clear that we are anxious to see our Muslim League friends occupying their rightful place in this Assembly. Every one of us is equally anxious to see them come back. But I fail to understand how this particular Resolution would stand in the way of their so coming here at a future date. If we have understood the political ideology of the Muslim correctly, if we understood the Cabinet Declaration correctly, there is one matter in which all are agreed and that is that the future India is to be a United India and that that India might also be outside the British Commonwealth of Nations, if the Indian people so decide. From the pronouncements made from time to time by Muslim League leaders I think we can rightly draw the conclusion that the Muslim League also stands for free and independent India. So, Sir, according to all of us including the League, the future India is going to be an independent free India. In that independent free India the source of authority is going to vest in the people who inhabit this land. That is the cherished right which has been won for the people inhabiting this globe by those who have gone before. That is the principle for which we have been fighting all along. Now when this Constituent Assembly meets and we draw up a declaration, I think the first thing to be included in that declaration should be this elementary right of a people which decides to be free, and therefore to this feature of the Resolution no one can have any objection.

Now, Sir, the Union which we are going to have in India is going to be a Union of all the parts of India. This certainly means that the future India is going to be a united India. I will again say that the shape of that future India which this Resolution envisages certainly shows that the framers of this Resolution have taken pretty good care to see that nothing is said in this Resolution which can create difficulties in the way of our friends of the Muslim League coming into this Assembly at some later date. I know, Sir, there are members in this Assembly—and I must confess that I am one of those,—who believe that there has arisen in India, an Indian nation, an Indian nation with an Indian culture and an Indian civilisation. Such men certainly are only too anxious to have a republic of the unitary type in this country. There has been such a tremendous increase in the economic forces of production in the world that if full use is to be made of these forces in this world, it is necessary that we should have still larger political units which will transgress the national boundaries of national states. It is a realisation of this truth which makes many Indians feel that India must have a centralised republic. But in spite of that, if we by this Resolution want to have a republic in India which will be democratic and at the same time decentralised, it is because the framers of this Resolution have taken care to take

into account the feelings of our Muslim League friends. Sir, there was a time when because of the historical circumstances prevailing in the world of those days, States of large sizes, containing populations homogenous in language and religion, could be erected. There can be no doubt that a national state with a homogenous population is a force and a living force. But unfortunately at a time when there is a tendency for these national states to pass out of existence, we have to deal with a bitter legacy left behind by them and that is the legacy of small nationalities, consisting often of a few thousands or a few lakhs, clamouring for separate states of their own. This has been creating havoc in this world. The whole of Eastern Europe has become the zone for breeding wars because in that portion of Europe are living small nationalities so intermixed that they cannot be divided into small states, and yet they clamour for separate political existence.

Sir, this Resolution gives expression also to the aspiration that India shall have her place, her rightful place, among the nations of the world. Every Indian legitimately aspires that one day India will give a lead to the whole of Asia and we can give this lead now by successfully constructing a state which will be a democratic republic, and, at the same time decentralised so that different cultural groups based on language, on religion, may be integrated in a vast republic. It is hoped that very soon the flood of Western Imperialism will retreat from the lands of Asia, and no sooner it has retreated, these lands will have to solve the problem of erecting independent states of their own. This question of nationalities is bound to raise its head even in those countries. They have such problems in Palestine, in the Arab world, and in the small islands in the south eastern portion of Asia. If we are to lead them rightly so that like the Balkans these Asiatic lands may not also become the battleground of the Imperialisms of the West, it is very necessary that we should set an example by having a state in India which will be a state for the whole of India and at the same time provide safeguards for cultural minorities. This is what this Resolution contemplates by further making provision for the fundamental rights of the individuals and groups living in this country and for safeguarding the fundamental rights of the minorities.

Sir, it is because of these features of this Resolution that I said that the Resolution was of a sacred nature and one which is bound to rank with those declarations which were made on similar occasions in the past by people just after they had shed their shackles of slavery. It not only is sacred, it is arduous also, arduous not only because of the difficulties pointed out by Dr. Jayakar, but arduous because of the attitude of British statesmen over there in England. I have just now told you that from my personal experience as an administrator I do not feel that the Britishers have made up their mind to peacefully transfer power to the people of India. Only the other day you had the speech of Mr Churchill. Not one word of cheer from that great imperialist. At a time like this in the history of our country when so many of us have assembled here to devise a constitution for this land, instead of giving a word of cheer, he was again at his old game. He had a fling at the Congress, he had a fling at Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru. In the advent of Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru into the Interim Government he sees the butchery of innocent men in Bihar. To Mr Churchill, living seven seas across, I will say, you have been supplied with a lie by some interested person and you have made yourself the willing tool for the propagation of that lie. The Government of Bihar did not hesitate for one single moment to use force and it used force, whatever force it had, to give protection to the lakhs of Musalmans living in that Province. The Bihar Government is a proud Government. It is not going to have dictations from the Government of India, so long as it is constituted under the Government of India Act, 1935. Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru is our leader and so he went to Bihar. He is a source of inspiration to us. I may tell Mr Churchill that during his strenuous tours of a few days

through the Province he gave the people a bit of his mind. I told the greatest official of this country that he could not restore order in Bihar in the short period in which we did it. Order could be speedily restored, not because of the bayonets that the Government of Bihar had or because of those bayonets that were lent to them by the Government of India. It was the dynamic personality of Pandit Nehru, the saintly presence of Dr Rajendra and the spectre of a fast unto death by the Mahatma that restored order quickly in Bihar. Mr Churchill has done great mischief by giving currency to such lies. I have taken much of your time. But I must tell you that before you pass this Resolution you must try to visualise the difficulties that may come in your way. I have not studied this declaration of the Cabinet from the point of view of a lawyer. I spurn to look at it from the point of a lawyer. I have been a soldier all my life and I would look at it from the point of view of a fighter. The statements of British statesmen are not quite helpful. It is just possible that not because of the difficulties that have been dangled before us by Dr Jayakar but because of the difficulties which may be created in our way by those in power. This Constituent Assembly may one day have to go the way the Constituent Assembly of France in 1709, had to go, because of the attitude of the King and statesmen of that time. So before I sit down, I would remind Hon'ble Members of the House that before they make up their minds to vote in favour of this Resolution they must realise the difficulty that they may have to face in giving effect to their resolve. If we pass this Resolution we must at the same time take a firm resolve to tear down that political edifice which owes its existence in India to the Government of India Act, 1935—a monument of constitutional jugglery—and build on it a Republic of the type which this Resolution envisages, whatever may be the difficulties that may come in the way.

3. Tuesday, the 17th December, 1946

The Constituent Assembly of India met in the Constitution Hall, New Delhi, at Eleven of the Clock. Mr Chairman (The Hon'ble Dr Rajendra Prasad) in the Chair.

The following Member presented her credential and signed the Register. The Hon'ble Mrs Vijayalakshmi Pandit.

Mr Chairman: I am happy to welcome Srimati Vijayalakshmi Pandit after the great work she has been able to achieve in the International Conference in America. (*Cheers*). I am sure the whole House will join me in that welcome as is apparent from the cheering. (*Applause*).

Is there any other member who wishes to sign the Roll?

(None.)

RESOLUTION RE: AIMS AND OBJECTS (contd.)

Mr Chairman: We shall proceed to the discussion of the Resolution and the amendments. I have got a long list of members who wish to speak. The list covers more than 50 names. I do not know how I can accommodate all the 50 speakers who have sent in their names. There may also be some others who wish to speak. I would therefore select according to my own

choice. I am not sure that that may not cause complaint in some quarter or other, but I suppose that that is the only way. I want to suggest to the speakers to be as brief as they can, because after all we have got to go through this work, finish this Resolution and take up other business. Sitting, as we are doing now for two hours a day, if every speaker takes 15 minutes, that means 6 days and if we sit both in the morning and evening, it means 3 days. I do not think we can afford so much time on this Resolution. I would therefore request the speakers to be as brief as they can without my fixing any time-limit. Ten minutes may be taken as a reasonable limit. I would call upon Mr Masani.

Mr M.R. Masani (Bombay: General): Mr Chairman, in rising to speak on this Resolution, I would like to make it clear at the outset that I do so, not as a member of one of the several communities into which, unfortunately, our nation is today divided, but as an Indian first and last. (*Hear, hear*). I do so even though I owe my origin to the very smallest or tiniest of our national minorities. It was one of those groups of people who received that welcome, that hospitality and that protection to which Babu Purshottamdas Tandon referred in his speech in seconding this Resolution. I hope, Sir, that these minorities which exist in our country, will, along with the majority, continue their progress towards becoming a nation, a process which in this ancient country was happening through the absorption of new groups that came into it through the centuries, but a process which seems to have been retarded through the rigidity of caste and through the exclusiveness of society in the past few centuries. I would only observe at this stage that the conception of a nation does not permit the existence of perpetual or permanent minorities. Either the nation absorbs these minorities or in course of time, it must break up. Therefore, while welcoming the clause in this Resolution which promises adequate safeguards for the minorities, I would say that it is a good thing that we have these legal and constitutional safeguards, but that ultimately no legal safeguard can protect small minorities from the overwhelming domination of big masses, unless on both sides an effort is made to get closer and become one corporate nation, a homogeneous nation. That process has been shown to us by the United States of America, where peoples of different races have, with one unfortunate exception, been absorbed into one nation.

There must have been indeed very few members of this House who were not deeply moved, and who did not feel elevated, by the noble speech with which the Mover of this Resolution introduced it in this House. He peered into the future and tried to see what shape the destiny of the people of India would take and, in response to the appeal which he made that we should consider this Resolution as something fundamental and avoid legal disputes and quibbling over its terms. I would like, in the very few minutes that, Sir, you have placed at my disposal, to draw the attention of this House to what I might call the social or long-term aspect of this Resolution and to try to understand what kind of society or State, what way of life this Resolution offers to the people of this country. I feel, Sir, that immediate disputes aside, that is the part of the Resolution at which the common people of the country will look with the closest attention.

I approach this part of the Resolution, Sir, as a Democratic Socialist, a Socialist who feels that democracy needs to be extended from the political to the economic and social spheres and that, if socialism does not mean that, then it means nothing at all. I welcome this Resolution in spite of the fact that neither the word 'Democracy' nor the word 'Socialist' finds a place in its Preamble. It is perhaps just as well that those words have been avoided because, as one of us here put it in his Presidential Address at the Meerut Congress, terms like Socialism or Democracy

can be made to cover a multitude of sins. The fog of words often covers realities. We know that the French Revolution was made in the name of fraternity but, towards the end of that Revolution, a cynic remarked—

“When I saw what men did in the name of fraternity, I resolved if I had a brother to call him cousin!”

That, I fear, is true of other revolutions as well.

As a Socialist, Sir, I welcome this aspect of the Resolution because, as the Mover has rightly pointed out, the content of economic democracy is there, although the label is not there. The Resolution, in my view clearly rejects the present social structure, it rejects the social *status quo*. There can be no other meaning to the words in clause 5 which refer to justice—social, economic and political. I do not think anyone here would argue that the present state of our society is based on justice. I think it has been estimated that to-day if our national income were to be divided into three equal thirds, 5 out of 100 Indians get one third of our national income, another 33 get the second third and the big mass of 62 get the remaining portion. That surely is not social or economic justice and, therefore, as I understand this Resolution, it would not tolerate the wide and gross inequalities which exist in our country. It would not tolerate the exploitation of a man's labour by somebody else. It certainly means that everyone who toils for the common good will get his fair share of the fruits of his labour. It also means that the people of this country, so far as any constitution can endow them, will get social security—the right to work or maintenance by the community. The Resolution also provides for equality of opportunity. Equality of opportunity, Sir, presupposed equal facilities in education and in the development of the talent that is latent in each one of us. To-day, among our masses a fund of latent talent exists which has no chance to come out and contribute to our national good. Equality of opportunity certainly assumes that every child in this country, every boy and girl, will get an equal opportunity to develop those faculties which he or she possesses in order to contribute to the common good.

That, Sir, is the socialist aspect of the Resolution. It does not provide for Socialism. It would be wrong to provide for such a thing, because this House has no mandate to go in for far-reaching economic changes in the country. Those changes can be brought about by a properly constituted Parliament when it comes into existence with the mandate of the people. All that we can do as an Assembly here, is to frame a constitution which will allow those far-reaching changes which are necessary, to be made and I submit, Sir, that this Resolution goes as far as it can in satisfying the most ardent socialist amongst us.

As I said, Sir, I approach this as a Democratic Socialist and, if Socialism is there, so is Democracy or the content of Democracy included in the Resolution. I do not think the word ‘Republic’ there is adequate. As Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru himself has stated, it is conceivable that a Republic may not be democratic. If we cast our eyes around the globe to-day, we shall see several instances of this and therefore, apart from saying that we shall be a Republic, it is necessary that we should make it clear, as clauses 4 and 5 do, that in our view Democracy does not mean a Police State, where the Secret Police can arrest or liquidate people without trial. It does not mean a totalitarian State where one party can seize power and keep opposition parties suppressed and not give them the freedom to function freely and with equal facilities. It cannot mean a Society or State where an individual is made a robot or where is reduced to “a small screw in the big machine of State”. Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru has pointed out that this Resolution is based on Democracy, and that all our past bears witness to the fact that we stand for Democracy

and for nothing less. But it is not only our past which is guarantee of our democratic faith. It is also our present.

Our national life has many different trends in it but, almost unanimously, we all stand for the freedom of the individual and for a democratic State. And to show how widely differing schools of thought in our midst can agree with almost one voice on this desire to distribute power to our common people, to distribute political and economic power so widely that no one man or group of people can exploit or dominate the rest, I will cite to you first the testimony of one who is not present amongst us, one who was referred to by the Mover as the Father of our Nation. I refer to Mahatma Gandhi. (*Cheers*). These are his words as quoted in 'A Week with Gandhi' by Louis Fischer:

"The centre of power now is in New Delhi, or in Calcutta and Bombay, in the big cities I would have it distributed among the seven hundred thousand villages of India...

"There will then by voluntary co operation these seven hundred thousand units, voluntary co-operation - not co-operation induced by Nazi methods. Voluntary co-operation will produce real freedom and a new order vastly superior to the new order in Soviet Russia...

"Some say there is ruthlessness in Russia, but that it is exercised for the lowest and the poorest and is good for that reason. For me, it has very little good in it."

And as if to find an echo of that in a thinker of a very different school, I shall now cite a sentence or two from a recent Picture of Socialism drawn by the leader of the Indian Socialist Party, Jai Parkash Narain. I regret, Sir, that he has not joined us in our labours here, but this is what he says and it sounds almost like an echo of Gandhiji's thought:

"The State under Socialism threatens, as a Russia, far from withering away, to become an all powerful tyrant maintaining a strangle-hold over the entire life of the citizen. This leads to totalitarianism of the type we witness in Russia today. By dispersing the ownership and management of industry and by developing the village into a democratic village republic, we break this strangle-hold to a very large extent and alternate the danger of.

Thus my picture of a socialist India is the picture of an economic and political democracy. In this democracy, men will neither be slaves to capitalism nor to a party or the State. Man will be free."

Sir, it is a fashion of our day to argue that the social and economic changes that are at present required cannot be made unless individual liberty and democracy are first destroyed and an all-powerful State can push its programmes through. This Resolution, if I read it aright, is a refutation of that thesis. It envisages far-reaching social changes--social justice in the fullest sense of the term but it works for those social changes through the mechanism of political Democracy and individual liberty. To those defeatists who say that this cannot be done, this Resolution says it can be done, and we have the intention and the determination to do it. The central problem of our times is whether the State is to own the people or the people are to own the State. Where the State belongs to the people, the State is a mere instrument sub-ordinate to the people and it serves the people. It only takes away the liberty of the individual to the extent that the people really desire it. Where the State owns the people, the people are mere robots in a big machine--pushed about here and there by the whims of an all-powerful dictator or an all-powerful party. It is because I believe, Sir that this Resolution points the direction to a constitution where the people will be in power, where the individual will occupy the centre of the stage and the development of the individual personality will be the main aim of our social good, that I support this part of the Resolution, this aspect of it, for, I believe that, as the fathers of the United States Constitution put it, every individual Indian has an "inalienable right to Life, Liberty and pursuit of Happiness". (*Cheers*.)

Mr F.R. Anthony (Bengal: General): Mr President, Sir, I have risen to support the amendment moved by Dr Jayakar. I have given the most earnest consideration to the Resolution moved by Pandit Nehru and to the amendment as it has been moved by Dr Jayakar. I appreciate the solemn character of the main Resolution, and I am not going to support the amendment purely by arguing technical or legal reasons in support of it. I appreciate the fact that the first part of that main Resolution affirms our solemn resolve to proclaim India as an Independent Sovereign Republic. That, I realise, is an article of faith with the Congress Party. It represents the supreme objective for which they have fought so long and so arduously. No one could, should, more than that, would dare ask them not to reiterate that pledge of theirs on this, the first and the most appropriate occasion. Apart from that, I think it is a pledge which is enshrined in the heart of every Indian. I also appreciate the fact that constitutional precedent shows that assemblies such as ours have at the very first opportunity declared their main and fundamental objective. And ours is to proclaim India as a Sovereign Independent Republic. Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru has asked us, quite rightly, not to read into this word "Republic" any unnecessary bogeys. It is only meant to indicate a constitution in contradistinction to a monarchical form of government. At the same time, he emphasised that it does not preclude units, autonomous units, from joining this Republic and retaining to themselves a monarchical form of government. The reasons why I have supported Dr Jayakar's amendment are that, I believe that it fulfils essentially both these things. The amendment respects the Congress pledge. It affirms our solemn resolve to frame a constitution for a free and democratic Sovereign State. The words used may not be identical. I would prefer the words to have been adopted from the main Resolution, but I believe that from the constitutional point of view, the connotations of these two phrases are virtually identical. Further, Dr Jayakar's amendment meets the second need, to proclaim at this first stage our fundamental objective of framing a constitution for a free and democratic Sovereign State. What I believe Dr Jayakar's amendment really seeks to do is to ask us to defer a declaration on the remaining parts of that main Resolution. That is, those parts relating to the Indian States, to the powers and functions of the Provinces and to the powers and functions of the Union. That, I believe is the intention of this amendment—to ask us to defer a declaration, however just it may be,—a declaration which may expose us to the charge, however baseless, that we are pre-judging matters of detail which have to be traversed in this Assembly and on which decisions should be made after they have been fully canvassed and discussed here. That is why, Sir, I feel that Dr Jayakar's amendment should be supported. It ought to be adopted because it is dictated, if I may say so, with all humility, by considerations of statesmanship, by the desire of every one of us to see the greatest measure of agreement and goodwill between the two major parties and by the desire of every one of us to see this great country of ours embracing, giving strength to and being given strength by those who make up her children.

Dr Syama Prasad Mookherjee (Bengal: General): Mr Chairman, Sir, I believe in the course of the chequered history of our country, we have often passed motions and resolution from different political parties and platform embodying our demands for an Independent Sovereign State for our motherland. But so far as today's Resolution is concerned, it has a deep and special significance. It is for the first time in the history of our country, since we came under British rule, that we have met to frame our own constitution. It is a great responsibility—in fact, as the Hon'ble the Mover of the Resolution reminded us, it is a solemn and sacred trust which we Indians have agreed to perform and we propose to do so to the best of our ability.

Now, Sir, the amendment which has been moved by Dr Jayakar raises certain questions of fundamental importance. I am sorry I cannot support the amendment. The effect of the amendment practically is that we cannot pass a resolution of this description at all until the Sections have met and made their recommendations. Dr Jayakar wants that we should not pass this Resolution until both the Indian States and the Muslim League are enabled to attend the Constituent Assembly. So far as the Indian States are concerned, they cannot come even if they wish to, until the Sections have met and settled the provincial constitutions, which means how many months none can foretell. So far as the Muslim League is concerned, no doubt, every one regrets that the Muslim League has not found it possible to attend the preliminary session of the Constituent Assembly. But what guarantee is there that, if this Resolution is postponed till the 20th January next, as Dr Jayakar suggests, the Muslim League will come and attend the session?

I feel, Sir, that the question should really be looked at from a different point of view. Does this Resolution raise issues which are in any way inconsistent with the Cabinet Mission's Scheme of May the 16th? If it does raise issues which are inconsistent with that scheme, then obviously we are pre-judging matters, we are raising matters which, it may be said, we have no right to do at this stage. Now, that document to my mind is something like a puzzle picture. You can interpret it in so many ways looking at it from different angles of vision. But looking at the Resolution as it stands, what is the declaration that it is making now? It enumerates certain fundamental things which are within the framework of the Scheme itself. I know that if we go into some details, I have to refer to at least one matter on which many of us hold divergent views, namely, the question of residuary powers. But that is a matter which the Cabinet Mission's Scheme has included within the contemplated framework of the Constitution. That is a matter on which the Indian National Congress has expressed its opinion; that is a matter, I believe, on which the Muslim League also has expressed its opinion. Some of us differ from that standpoint and urge a stronger Centre in India's paramount interest. We shall do so at an appropriate stage later on. Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru, as the mover of the Resolution, has also made it clear that we are not now framing a constitution for India; we are only passing a resolution at this stage, at the preliminary stage, outlining generally the shape that the future constitution of India should take. In other words, when the time actually comes for us to frame the Constitution, I believe, Sir, it will be open to any one to bring up any matter that he chooses before the House as an amendment to any proposal that may be made and which is bound to be considered on its merits. The passing of this Resolution, I take it, can be no legal bar whatever against any member bringing forward any amendment to the draft Constitution that this Assembly may frame at a later stage. If assurances are forthcoming on these two issues, namely, that the Resolution as drafted does not go against the main features of the Cabinet Mission's Scheme, and also that it does not commit the Constituent Assembly in a definite manner with regard to the details of the Constitution that is yet to come, I see no reason why any obstacle should be put forward to passing the Resolution at this stage.

The Resolution has an importance of its own. After all, we are sitting here not in our individual capacity, but we claim to represent the people of this great land. Our sanction is not the British Parliament; our sanction is not the British Government; our sanction is the people of India (*cheers*). And if that is so, we have to say something not merely to frame rules and regulations, — we have to say something concrete to the people of India as to why we have assembled here on the 9th December, 1946. If what Dr Jayakar says had been the correct position, then this Constituent Assembly should not have been called at all; in fact, Dr Jayakar

need not have attended the meeting. He should have informed the Governor General,—“I regret I cannot accept your invitation because I feel you are doing wrong in calling the Constituent Assembly as the Muslim League and the Indian States are not attending.” But having come here, for us to raise this issue is practically to walk into the trap of the Muslim League and to strengthen the hands of reactionaries in Great Britain. I know that Dr Jayakar will be the last man to do such a thing. I admire his courage of conviction; in fact, every one who feels that a certain thing should be done, must be able to come forward and present his view point. But we may also respectfully point out to Dr Jayakar the great danger that lies in the innocent looking amendment that he has put forward before the House, and I hope that he will withdraw the amendment in due course when the time comes.

I would like just to say a few words with regard to another aspect of the question. The Resolution is there, but how are we going to implement it? What are the impediments that we already see before us which may prevent us from carrying this Resolution into effect? Now, one of course, is the status of the Constituent Assembly in the absence of the Muslim League. Dr Jayakar yesterday referred to some analogy of a dinner party. He said, “If guests are invited and some guests do not come, then now can you have the dinner party?” But he forgot to say what will be the fate of the guests who have already arrived? If he is going to be the host and invites six guests, suppose five of them come and one is absent, is he then going to starve those five guests of his and turn them out of his house and say, “the sixth has not come and you are not going to get your food?” Obviously not. Here also the hunger for freedom for those who have come has to be satisfied. Mr Churchill said that the absence of the Muslims League in the Constituent Assembly was something like the absence of the bride in the Church when the marriage was going to take place. I do not know, when the Indian States come in and also the Muslim League, how many brides the Constituent Assembly is going to have ultimately. In any case, if that is Mr Churchill’s point of view, he should not play the role of a seducer. He should have asked Mr Jinnah to go back to India and join the Constituent Assembly and place his point of view before the people of India. No one has said that the Muslim League should not come. In fact, we want that the Muslim League should come so that we can meet each other face to face. If there are difficulties if there are differences of opinion, we do not wish that we should carry only by majority votes. That may have to be done as a last resort, but obviously, every attempt must be made, will be made to come to an agreement as regards the future Constitution of India. But why is the Muslim League being prevented from coming? My charge is that the Muslim is not coming because of the encouragement it receives from British attitude. The Muslim League has been encouraged to feel that if it does not come, it may be able to veto the final decision of the Constituent Assembly. The power of veto in some form or another has again passed into the hands of the Muslim League, and that is the danger that threatens the future activities of this great Assembly. Sir, I am not going to discuss in detail, because this is neither the time nor the occasion when I can discuss, the various provisions of the British statements. But, I would certainly say this: that this Constituent Assembly, although it is a British creation for the time being, once it has come into existence, it has the power, if it has the will, to assert its right and to do what is best and proper for the attainment of India’s freedom, for the good of the people of India irrespective of caste, creed or community. (*Hear, hear*).

Now, Sir, we have said, at any rate, the Indian National Congress has said—because that was one of the major parties with whom negotiations went on—that they stand by the Cabinet Mission Scheme of May 16. It gladdened my heart yesterday when the Hon’ble Sardar

Vallabhbhai Patel got up, interrupting Dr Jayakar, and said that the Congress has not accepted anything beyond the Statement of May 16, 1946. (*Cheers*). That I consider to be an announcement of fundamental importance. We have got to make it clear as to what we are here for. I say that our attitude should be something like this: We shall give the Cabinet Mission scheme of May 16, a change; genuinely, honestly we shall see if we can come to an agreement with the other parties and elements on the basis of the Scheme of May 16, 1946. But subsequent interpretations, if any, we are not going to accept. Or if any party chooses to deviate from the Scheme and break away, we shall proceed and frame the Constitution as we wish.

There has been considerable difference of opinion with regard to one clause of the Statement of May 16, 1946, and that is with regard to the question of grouping. Now, it is for the Congress to decide, as one of the major parties involved, what interpretation it is going to accept ultimately. If the interpretation as given by His Majesty's Government is not accepted, and if the Congress considers that the interpretation put upon that portion of the Statement by it (the Congress) is correct, then of course a crisis may come. That is a question which has to be decided apart from a discussion on this Resolution. In fact, the greater the delay in making a decision on that question, the greater will be the atmosphere of unreality; so far as the proceedings of this House are concerned. But, after that question is decided, supposing the interpretation put by His Majesty's Government is accepted, whether by a reference to the Federal Court, or not, I need not go into, then we shall go on. We shall proceed with our work. The Muslim League may come or may not come. If it comes, well and good; and even if it does not come, it cannot retard India's freedom and we must claim to proceed with our business in this Constituent Assembly. I feel, Sir, that if a crisis does come, as I visualise, it is pretation put by His Majesty's Government is accepted, whether by a reference with constitutional means. In view of the developments that have taken place during the last few days, our task will not be performed so easily. But let me emphasise that whatever has to be done, it has to be done through the agency of this Constituent Assembly and none other. If ultimately we have to function, we shall function on our own responsibility and prepare a constitution which we shall be able to place before the bar of world opinion and satisfy everyone that we have treated the people of India, minorities and all, in a just and equitable manner.

After all, what happened with regard to the South African question? We have today in our midst, the Hon'ble Mrs Pandit, who has come back to her motherland after a great victory. But even there she was not supported by our self-constituted trustee—His Majesty's Government in Great Britain. In fact the vote went against India so far as Great Britain was concerned. But she won. The Indian Delegation won before the bar of world opinion. Similar may be the case with regard to the Constituent Assembly also. If we take courage in both hands and frame a constitution which will be just and equitable to all, then we shall be able, if need be, to declare this Constituent Assembly as the first Parliament of a Free and Sovereign Indian Republic. (*Loud cheers.*) We then may be able to worm our own National Government and enforce our decision on the people of this land. As I said a few minutes ago, our sanction is not the British people or the British Government. Our sanction is the people of India and therefore we have to make the ultimate appeal to the people of our country.

Sir, when we talk about minorities, it is suggested as if the Muslim League represents the only minority in India. But that is not so. There are other minorities. Coming from Bengal with all her tragic suffering, let me remind the House that Hindus also constitute a minority in at least four Provinces in India and, if minority rights are to be protected, such rights must affect every minority which may vary from Province to Province.

Only last night, Lord Simon made the startling announcement that the Constituent Assembly sitting in Delhi consists of only Caste Hindus. So many false statements have been uttered during the last few days in England that it is difficult to keep count of them all. But who are represented in this House today? There are Hindus; there are some Muslims too. At least there are Muslims from one Muslim province who come as representatives of a Government which is functioning there in spite of the Muslim League. There are the representatives of the Province of Assam which is supposed to be part and parcel of Mr Jinnah's Pakistan-to-come. That Province is also officially represented by the majority of the people of that province. You have the Scheduled Castes. All the Scheduled Caste members who have been elected to the Constituent Assembly are here. Even Dr Ambedkar who may not agree with us in all matters is present here (*applause*), and I take it, it will be possible for us to convert him, or reconvert him and go get him to our side, (*renewed applause*) when we go to discuss in detail the interests of those whom he represents. There are other Scheduled Caste members also present here. The Sikhs are present here; all of them. The Anglo-Indians are present and so are the Indian Christians. So, how did it lie in the mouth of Lord Simon ... (*A Voice*: Parsis also are present here). Tribal areas and the Adibasis are here represented by my friend Mr J. Singh. In fact, every element that has been elected to the Indian Constituent Assembly is here barring the Muslim League represents a section. I take it a large section, may be a very large section of the Muslim community, but it is absolutely false to suggest that this Constituent Assembly consists only of one section of the people, the Caste Hindus, as though Caste Hindus have been born only to oppress the others and to fashion out something which will be disastrous to the interests of India. Now, is it suggested that if one section of the Indian people chooses to be absent from the Constituent Assembly, India should continue to remain a slave country? (*A Voice*: "No"). That reply has to be given to the people of this country who are absent and also their instigators. I would say, Sir, that we should say to the British people once and for all, "We want to remain friendly with you. You started your career in this country as traders. You came here as supplicants before the Great Mughal. You wanted to exploit the wealth of this country. Luck was in your favour. By forgery, fraud and force, you succeeded in establishing—these are all matters of history—your Government in this country, but not with the willing co-operation of the people of this land. You introduced separate electorates, you introduced religion into Indian politics. That was not done by Indians. You did it, only to perpetuate your rule in this country. You have created vested interests in this country which have become powerful enough now and which cannot be destroyed with their own willing co-operation. In spite of all these, if you really want that you and India should remain as friends in the future, we are prepared to accept your hand or co-operation. But for heaven's sake, it is not the business of the British Government to interfere so far as the domestic problems of India are concerned. Every country will have its own domestic problems and unfortunately India has her domestic problems too, and those domestic problems must ultimately be settled by the people of this country." I hope, Sir, as we are not framing a constitution now, as we are only laying down a general outline of the things that we want to do in the future, the House will refuse to listen to narrow technicalities. We shall go ahead with our work in spite of all difficulties and obstacles and help to create that great India, united and strong, which will be the motherland of not this community or that, not this class or that, but of every person, man, woman and child, inhabiting this great land, irrespective of race, caste, creed or community, where everyone will have an equal opportunity, an equal freedom: an equal status so that he or she could develop himself or herself to the best of his or her talents and serve faithfully and fearlessly this beloved common motherland of ours.

Mr Chairman: Dr Ambedkar.

Dr B.R. Ambedkar (Bengal: General): Mr Chairman, I am indeed very grateful to you for having called me to speak on the Resolution. I must however confess that your invitation has come to me as a surprise. I thought that as there were some 20 or 22 people ahead of me, my turn, if it did come at all, would come tomorrow. I would have preferred that as today I have come without any preparation whatsoever. I would have liked to prepare myself as I had intended to make a full statement on an occasion of this sort. Besides you have fixed a time limit of 10 minutes. Placed under these limitations, I don't know how I could do justice to the Resolution before us. I shall however do my best to condense in as few words as possible what I think about the matter.

Mr Chairman, the Resolution in the light of the discussion that has gone on since yesterday, obviously divides itself into two parts, one part which is controversial and another part which is non-controversial. The part which is non-controversial is the part which comprises paragraphs (5) to (7) of this Resolution. These paragraphs set out the objectives of the future Constitution of this country. I must confess that, coming as the Resolution does from Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru who is reputed to be a Socialist, this Resolution, although non-controversial is to my mind very disappointing. I should have expected him to go much further than he has done in that part of the Resolution. As a student of history, I should have preferred this part of the Resolution not being embodied in it at all. When one reads that part of the Resolution, it reminds one of the Declaration of the Rights of Man which was pronounced by the French Constituent Assembly. I think I am right in suggesting that, after the lapse of practically 450 years, the Declaration of the Rights of Man and the principles which are embodied in it has become part and parcel of our mental make-up. I say they have become not only the part and parcel of the mental make-up of modern man in every civilised part of the world, but also in our own country which is so orthodox, so archaic in its thought and its social structure, hardly anyone can be found to deny its validity. To repeat it now as the Resolution does, is to say the least, pure pedantry. These principles have become the silent immaculate premise of our outlook. It is therefore unnecessary to proclaim as forming a part of our creed. The Resolution suffers from certain other lacuna. I find that this part of the Resolution, although it enunciates certain rights, does not speak of remedies. All of us are aware of the fact that rights are nothing unless remedies are provided whereby people can seek to obtain redress when rights are invaded. I find a complete absence of remedies. Even the usual formula that no man's life, liberty and property shall be taken without the due process of law, finds no place in the Resolution. These fundamental rights set out are made subject to law and morality. Obviously what is law, what is morality will be determined by the Executive of the day, and when the Executive may take one view another Executive may take another view and we do not know what exactly would be the position with regard to fundamental rights, if this matter is left to the Executive of the day. Sir, there are here certain provisions which speak of justice, economical, social and political. If this Resolution has a reality behind it and a sincerity, of which I have not the least doubt, coming as it does from the Mover of the Resolution, I should have expected some provision whereby it would have been possible for the State to make economic, social and political justice a reality and I should have from that point of view expected the Resolution to state in most explicit terms that in order that there may be social and economic justice in this country, that there would be nationalisation of industry and nationalisation of land, I do not understand how it could be possible for any future Government which believes in doing justice, socially,

economically and politically, unless its economy is a socialistic economy. Therefore, personally, although I have no objection to the enunciation of these propositions, the Resolution is, to my mind, somewhat disappointing. I am however prepared to leave this subject where it is with the observations I have made.

Now I come to the first part of the Resolution, which includes the first four paragraphs. As I said from the debate that has gone on in the House, this has become a matter of controversy. The controversy seems to be centred on the use of that word 'Republic'. It is centred on the sentence occurring in paragraph 4 "the sovereignty is derived from the people". Thereby it arises from the point made by my friend. Dr Jayakar yesterday that in the absence of the Muslim League it would not be proper for this Assembly to proceed to deal with this Resolution. Now, Sir, I have got not the slightest doubt in my mind as to the future evolution and the ultimate shape of the social, political and economic structure of this great country. I know to-day we are divided politically, socially and economically. We are a group of warring camps and I may go even to the extent of confessing that I am probably one of the leaders of such a camp. But, Sir, with all this, I am quite convinced that given time and circumstances nothing in the world will prevent this country from becoming one. (*Applause*). With all our castes and creeds, I have not the slightest hesitation that we shall in some form be a united people. (*Cheers*). I have no hesitation in saying that notwithstanding the agitation of the Muslim League for the partition of India some day enough light would dawn upon the Muslims themselves and they too will begin to think that a United India is better even for them. (*Loud cheers and applause*).

So far as the ultimate goal is concerned. I think none of us need have any apprehensions. None of us need have any doubt. Our difficulty is not about the ultimate future. Our difficulty is how to make the heterogeneous mass that we have to-day take a decision in common and march on the way which leads us to unity. Our difficulty is not with regard to the ultimate, our difficulty is with regard to the beginning. Mr Chairman, therefore, I should have thought that in order to make us willing friends in order to induce every party, every section in this country to take on to the road it would be an act of greatest statesmanship for the majority party even to make a concession to the prejudices of people who are not prepared to march together and it is for that, that I propose to make this appeal. Let us leave aside slogans, let us leave aside words which frighten people. Let us even make a concession to the prejudices of our opponents, bring them in, so that they may willingly join with us on marching upon that road, which as I said, if we walk long enough, must necessarily lead us to unity. If I, therefore, from this place support Dr Jayakar's amendment, it is because I want all of us to realise that whether we are right or wrong, whether the position that we take is in consonance with our legal rights, whether that agrees with the Statement of May the 16th or December 6th, leave all that aside. This is too big a question to be treated as a matter of legal rights. It is not a legal question at all. We should leave aside all legal considerations and make some attempt, whereby those who are not prepared to come, will come. Let us make it possible for them to come, that is my appeal.

In the course of the debate that took place, there were two questions which were raised, which struck me so well that I took the trouble of taking them down on piece of paper. The one question was, I think, by my friend, the Prime Minister of Bihar who spoke yesterday in this Assembly. He said, how can this Resolution prevent the League from coming into the Constituent Assembly? Today my friend, Dr Syama Prasad Mookherjee, asked another question. Is this Resolution inconsistent with the Cabinet Mission's Proposal? Sir, I think they are very important questions and they ought to be answered and answered categorically. I do maintain

that this Resolution whether it is intended to bring about the result or not, whether it is a result of cold calculation or whether it is a mere matter of accident is bound to have the result of keeping the Muslim League out. In this connection I should like to invite your attention to paragraph 3 of the Resolution, which I think is very significant and very important. Paragraph 3 envisages the future constitution of India. I do not know what is the intention of the Mover of the Resolution. But I take it that after this Resolution is passed, it will act as a sort of a directive to the Constituent Assembly to frame a constitution in terms of para. 3 of the Resolution. What does para. 3 say? Para. 3 says that in this country there shall be two different sets of polity, one at the bottom, autonomous Provinces or the States or such other areas as care to join a United India. These autonomous units will have full power. They will have also residuary powers. At the top, over the Provincial units, there will be a Union Government, having certain subjects for legislation, for execution and for administration. As I read this part of the Resolution, I do not find any reference to the idea of grouping, an intermediate structure between the Union on the one hand and the provinces on the other. Reading this para. in the light of the Cabinet Mission's Statement or reading it even in the light of the Resolution passed by the Congress at its Wardha session, I must confess that I am a great deal surprised at the absence of any reference to the idea of grouping of the provinces. So far as I am personally concerned, I do not like the idea of grouping (*hear, hear*). I like a strong united Centre, (*hear, hear*) much stronger than the Centre we had created under the Government of India Act of 1935. But, Sir, these opinions, these wishes have no bearing on the situation at all. We have travelled a long road. The Congress Party, for reasons best known to itself, consented, if I may use that expression, to the dismantling of a strong Centre which had been created in this country as a result of 150 years of administration, and which, I must say, was to me a matter of great administration and respect and refuge. But having given up that position, having said that we do not want a strong centre, and having accepted that there must be or should be an intermediate polity, a sub-federation between the Union Government and the Provinces, I would like to know why there is no reference in para. 3 to the idea of grouping. I quite understand that the Congress Party, the Muslim League and His Majesty's Government are not *ad idem* the interpretation of the clause relating to grouping. But I always thought that, —I am prepared to stand corrected if it is shown that I am wrong,—at least it was agreed by the Congress Party that if the Provinces which are placed within different groups consent to form a Union or Sub-federation, the Congress would have no objection to that proposal. I believe I am correct in interpreting the mind of the Congress Party. The question I ask is this. Why did not the Mover of this Resolution make reference to the idea of a Union of Provinces or grouping of Provinces on the terms on which he and his party was prepared to accept it? Why is the idea of Union completely effaced from this Resolution? I find no answer. None whatever. I therefore say in answer to the two questions which have been posed here in this Assembly by the Prime Minister of Bihar and Dr Syama Prasad Mookherjee as to how this Resolution is going to prevent the Muslim League from entering this Constituent Assembly, that here is para. 3 which the Muslim League is bound to take advantage of and justify its continued absention. Sir, my friend Dr Jayakar, yesterday, in arguing his case for postponing a decision on this issue put his case, if I may say so, without offence to him, somewhat in a legalistic manner. The basis of his argument was, have you the right to do so? He read out certain portions from the Statement of the Cabinet Mission which related to the procedural part of the Constituent Assembly and his contention was that the procedure that this Constituent Assembly was adopting in deciding upon this Resolution straightaway was inconsistent with the procedure that was laid down in

that Paper. Sir, I like to put the matter in a somewhat different way. The way I like to put it is this. I am not asking you to consider whether you have the right to pass this Resolution straightaway or not. It may be that you have the right to do so. The question I am asking is this. Is it prudent for you to do so? Is it wise for you to do so? Power is one thing; wisdom is quite a different thing and I want this House to consider this matter from the point of view, not of what authority is vested in this Constituent Assembly, I want this House to consider the matter from another point of view, namely, whether it would be wise, whether it would be statesmanlike, whether it would be prudent to do so at this stage. The answer that I give is that it would not be prudent, it would not be wise. I suggest that another attempt may be made to bring about a solution of the dispute between the Congress and the Muslim League. This subject is so vital, so important, that I am sure it could never be decided on the mere basis of dignity of one party or the dignity of another party. When deciding the destinies of nations, dignities of people, dignities of leaders and dignities of parties ought to count for nothing. The destiny of the country ought to count for everything. It is because I feel that it would in the interest not only of this Constituent Assembly so that it may function as one whole, so that it may have the reaction of the Muslim League before it proceeds to decision that I support Dr Jayakar's amendment—we must also consider what is going to happen with regard to the future, if we act precipitately. I do not know what plans the Congress Party, which holds this House in its possession, has in its mind? I have no power of divination to know what they are thinking about. What are their tactics, what is their strategy, I do not know. But applying my mind as an outsider to the issue that has arisen, it seems to me there are only three ways by which the future will be decided. Either there shall have to be surrender by the one party to the wishes of the other—that is one way. The other way would be what I call a negotiated peace and the third way would be open war. Sir, I have been hearing from certain members of the Constituent Assembly that they are prepared to go to war. I must confess that I am appalled at the idea that anybody in this country should think of solving the political problems of this country by the method of war. I do not know how many people in this country support that idea. A good many perhaps do and the reason why I think they do, is because most of them, at any rate a great many of them, believe that the war that they are thinking of, would be a war on the British. Well, Sir, if the war that is contemplated, that is in the minds of people, can be localised, circumscribed, so that it will not be more than a war on the British, I probably may not have much objection to that sort of strategy. But will it be a war on the British only? I have no hesitation and I do want to place before this House in the clearest terms possible that if war comes in this country and if that war has any relation to the issue with which we are confronted to-day, it will not be a war on the British. It will be a war on the Muslims. It will be a war on the Muslims or which is probably worse, it will be a war on a combination of the British and the Muslims. I cannot see how this contemplated war be of the sort different from what I fear it will be. Sir, I like to read to the House a passage from Burke's great speech on Conciliation with America. I believe this may have some effect upon the temper of this House. The British people as you know were trying to conquer the rebellious colonies of the United States, and bring them under their subjection contrary to their wishes. In repelling this idea of conquering the colonies this is what Burke said:

"First, Sir, permit me to observe, that the use of force alone is but temporary. It may subdue for a moment; but it does not remove the necessity of subduing again; and a nation is not governed, which is perpetually to be conquered."

"My next objection is its uncertainty. Terror is not always the effect of —and an armament is not a victory. If you do not succeed, you are without resource; for, conciliation failing, force remains; but, force failing, no further hope of reconciliation is left. Power and authority are sometimes bought by kindness, but they can never be begged as alms by an impoverished and defeated violence ..."

"A further objection to force is, that you impair the object by your very endeavours to preserve it. The thing you fought for is not the thing which you recover; but depreciated, sunk, wasted and consumed in the contest."

These are weighty words which it would be perilous to ignore. If there is anybody who has in his mind the project of solving the Hindu-Muslim problem by force, which is another name of solving it by war, in order that the Muslims may be subjugated and made to surrender to the Constitution that might be prepared without their consent, this country would be involved in perpetually conquering them. The conquest would not be once and for ever. I do not wish to take more time than I have taken and I will conclude by again referring to Burke. Burke has said somewhere that it is easy to give power, it is difficult to give wisdom. Let us prove by our conduct that if this Assembly has arrogated to itself sovereign powers it is prepared to exercise them with wisdom. That is the only way by which we can carry with us all sections of the country. There is no other way that can lead us to unity. Let us not have no doubt on that point.

Sardar Ujjal Singh (Punjab: Sikh): Sir, I stand here to support the Resolution which was so ably and eloquently moved by Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru. Sir, the Resolution places before this Assembly the objective which we must have in view before we start on our labours. This is undoubtedly a unique and solemn occasion in the history of India when the chosen people of this country have assembled here to prepare a charter of liberty and a scheme of governance for the people and by the people. Sir, before we sit to work we must send a message of hope and cheer to the dumb millions of this country and to the world outside whose eyes at this moment are fixed upon us. And I believe this Resolution will give a new hope of an early realisation of their dreams to the teeming millions, the dumb masses of this country, who have been struggling hard for the last many years to achieve freedom. Sir, in this matter of the fight for freedom, as in many others, history repeats itself. Ours is not the only country which has to struggle so long and so hard. The Goddess of Liberty must take her due toll of sacrifice from everyone. It may be that the struggle is violent and has been violent elsewhere, and non-violent in this country. For this and for many other things for which this country stands today and hopes to achieve in the future, we have a great debt of gratitude to that master-mind, Mahatma Gandhi, whom Pandit Nehru described as the Father of the Indian Nation.

Sir, the Constituent Assembly is the culmination of the final stage of the struggle for freedom. The Resolution before this House is an expression of the pent-up emotions of the millions of this country. It can be divided into three parts. The first part deals with the declaration of an Independent Sovereign Republic of India. The second deals with autonomous units, having residuary powers with a Union of them all, *i.e.*, including the Indian States. The third part deals with social and economic freedom and justice to all and with adequate safeguards for the minorities, backward classes and tribal areas. Opinions may differ with regard to the exact wording of the Resolution or its brevity in certain respects, but taken as a whole it is an expression of the will of the people of this country.

Sir, my Hon'ble friend, Dr Jayakar, for whom I have got the highest respect, objected to this Resolution being moved and taken into consideration on the floor of this House at this stage on the ground that we are, at this preliminary session, precluded from taking into

consideration any other matter excepting those three which are set out in paragraph 19 of the Cabinet Mission's Statement. He further suggested that the House would be well advised to take this matter on the 20th of January, when we meet again after we adjourn for the Christmas. My Hon'ble friend probably knows, when we meet again on the 20th of January for completing our unfinished business, we will be meeting again in a preliminary session and if he objects to this Resolution being taken into consideration today, his objection holds good also when we meet again on the 20th of January. (*Hear, hear*).

Sir, the second point suggested was that we should postpone its consideration for a few weeks so that the Muslim League and the States may have an opportunity to have their say so this matter. I am one of those who regret very much that the Muslim League is not present here today in this House and also value and seek the co-operation of the Muslim League. But it is not the fault of this House that those friends are absent today and we do not know when they may join us. It is not, therefore, fair to this House, having assembled here, to wait indefinitely without knowing when the other party is coming in. With regard to the States, if my Hon'ble friend were to study the State Paper, he would find that it is clearly laid down that States will come at the last stage when we, after completing our provincial constitutions, reassemble for the Union Constitution making. Are we to postpone a resolution of this nature to the very last stage when a good part of our constitution has been framed? A resolution of this importance must be considered and adopted at the beginning of our work.

Another objection to this Resolution was taken by Dr Ambedkar that he did not find the word "grouping" mentioned anywhere. Dr Ambedkar should know that grouping is an optional matter and, if I may say so, almost all of us are against grouping. Even the State Paper leaves it to the option of the Sections or the Province. In a resolution of this kind the Mover could not put in what the Sections may decide otherwise or the Provinces may decide otherwise.

The Indian States may find some objection to the word "Republic" being used in the Resolution. Indian States have been used to the monarchical system of government and they may have some fears on that score; but in the light of the speech of Pandit Nehruji those fears are entirely unjustified. In an Indian Republic the people the people of the Indian States, if they so choose, can retain a monarchical form of government in their own part of the country.

I believe, Sir, that the exact scheme when it emerges from the labours of the Constituent Assembly will be such as will be acceptable to all the elements in Indian life and will be suited to the talents and the peculiar conditions of this country.

The second portion of the Resolution deals with the Union and the autonomous units, residuary powers being given to the units. Some of us may have serious objection to the residuary powers being given to the Units, but this proposal is in accord with the State Paper Scheme and is an essential part of paragraph 15. It may be a bitter pill for most of us, but it has got to be swallowed.

The third part of the Resolution gives an assurance to the minorities and the backward classes that their interests will be adequately safeguarded. Now, Sir, in this connection my community feels that the safeguards should not only be adequate but should be satisfactory to the Sikhs and the other minorities concerned. With your permission, Sir, I would like to acquaint the House with the solemn assurance given to the Sikhs in the Congress Resolution of December 1929, passed at the Lahore Session of the Indian National Congress. The relevant portion of the Resolution which related to the Sikhs and the minorities read, as follows:

"No solution thereof (*i.e.*, the communal problem) in any future constitution of India will be acceptable to the Congress which does not give full satisfaction to the Muslims, Sikhs, other minorities."

Ever since this resolution was passed, the Sikhs have made a common cause and have fought the country's battle for freedom side by side with the Congress. Unfortunately, when the British Mission came and formulated their proposals, *i.e.*, the Statement of May 16, although they admitted the Sikhs to be one of the three main communities in India, they completely failed to provide any protection or safeguards for the Sikhs. In the case of the Mussalmans, the Mission pointed out that there was a real apprehension of their culture, and political and social life becoming submerged in a unitary India, in which the Hindus would be a dominant element. They however entirely failed to realise the same plight of the Sikhs in the Punjab which is the Holy Land and the Homeland of the Sikhs, under a Muslim majority. It was the height of injustice on the part of the Cabinet Delegation not to have provided similar safeguards for the Sikhs in the Punjab and the 'B' Section, as they had provided for the Muslims in the Union. Sir Stafford Cripps, while speaking in the House of Commons the other day, remarked that they could not give similar rights to the Sikhs in the Punjab and the 'B' Section as they had given to other minorities. May I ask whether the Mission took into consideration the other minorities when they provided safeguards for the Mussalmans in the Union Centre? They did not consider the Sikhs although they were admitted to be one of the main communities of India. On the other hand, I feel that the Sikhs have a stronger claim for having similar safeguards in the Punjab than the Mussalmans have in the Union Centre. I also feel and believe that any safeguards given to the Sikhs in Section 'B' and in the Punjab will be a guarantee for the protection of the rights of other minorities in that area. As nothing was done by the Mission, a wave of indignation went throughout the entire Sikh community and their indignation rose to the highest pitch. A resolution was passed by the Sikhs at a special meeting held at Amritsar—their holy centre, that the Constituent Assembly should be boycotted and the Sikhs did boycott the Assembly. The Congress, however, accepted the proposals of the Cabinet Mission, and eminent leaders of the Congress appealed to the Sikhs to accept the proposals also. Sardar Patel particularly pleaded the cause of the Sikhs at the All-India Congress Committee session in Bombay and our sincere thanks are due to him. In the House of Lords on the 18th July last, while speaking on a debate, the Secretary of State made significant reference in the Sikhs in the following words:

"It is, however, essential that fullest consideration should be given to their claims for they are a distinct and important community, but on population basis adopted they lose their weightage. This situation will, to some extent, we hope, be remedied by their full representation in the Advisory Committee on Minorities set up under paragraph 20 of the Statement of May 16."

He further said:

"Over and above that, we have represented to the two major parties who were both most receptive in this matter that some special means of giving the Sikhs a strong position in the affairs of the Punjab or in the N.W. Group should be devised."

This assurance though satisfactory in some respects was not sufficient to change the attitude of the Sikh community towards the Constituent Assembly. Then on the 9th August, the Congress Working Committee passed a resolution appealing to the Sikhs to reconsider their position. the resolution stated

"The Committee are aware that injustice has been done to the Sikhs and they have drawn attention of the Cabinet Delegation to it. We are however, strongly of the opinion that the Sikhs would serve their cause and the cause of the country's freedom better by participation in the Constituent Assembly than by keeping out of it. It therefore appeals to the Sikhs to reconsider their decision and express their willingness to take part in the Constituent Assembly. The Working Committee assures the Sikhs that Congress will give them all possible support in redressing their legitimate grievances and in securing adequate safeguards."

The Sikhs reviewed the whole position on the 14th August. The resolution of the Congress Working Committee carried the greatest weight with them, and it was on that account that the Panthic Board, which was called at a special meeting, decided to lift the ban on participation in the work of the Constituent Assembly. The resolution of the Panthic Board decided to give the Constituent Assembly a trial to secure for the Sikhs similar safeguards as were given to the Mussalmans in the Unions. The Sikh members are here assembled according to that mandate. I have great faith in the Congress leaders and sincerely hope that the assurance given to the Sikhs will be implemented without delay as the time has come for the translation of those solemn words into action.

I am sorry to take the time of the House in going in a little detail into the Sikh position, but I thought it my duty to acquaint the House with the Sikh case. Let me, however, make it clear that the safeguards which the Sikhs demand for their due and strong position in the Punjab and the North West, are meant to be provided within the Indian Republic and not outside. They are anxious that all communities may live together in harmony and peace. They are prepared to live happily with their Mussalman brothers in the Punjab and the North West, even treating them as elder brothers, but not as a superior ruling race or a separate nation. The Sikhs, therefore, cannot tolerate the partition of this great and ancient land. They will stoutly oppose the establishment of Pakistan and all that it implies or stands for.

Sir, if I may be permitted to say the Sikhs have a burning passion for freedom. No single community in the history of India has struggled so long and so hard as the Sikhs have done to drive away foreign hordes from this land: and in recent times, their record of sacrifice in the battle of country's freedom is second to none. They will continue to march with the Congress in its fight for independence with unabated zeal and vigour. (*Hear, hear*). They, however, want their separate entity and position to be maintained and strengthened so that they may be able to contribute their full quota to the service of the country.

Sir, I realise that it is a stupendous task that this august Assembly has set itself to accomplish. There are hurdles and obstacles in our way, but I feel certain that we will be able to cross those hurdles and overcome all those obstacles if we deliberate with caution, act with decision and, if need be, oppose with firmness. With these words, Sir, I support the Resolution. (*Cheers*).

Seth Govind Das (CP and Berar: General): *Mr Chairman, in the Central Assembly and in the Council of State I speak in English as the Rules demand it; but here after so many English speeches I would like to speak in the language of my country.

I have come to speak for the Resolution and against the amendments. While speaking in favour of the Resolution I cannot resist the desire to offer my thanks to the Hon'ble Dr Jayakar for his beautiful speech. I was surprised to hear of Dr Jayakar's amendment yesterday. Dr Jayakar and I have been friends since the days of the Swaraj Party. I can understand his amendment. I can understand his desire to defer voting on the Resolution until the Muslim League joins;

* English translation of Hindustani speech begins.

but I fail to understand the logic of the arguments advanced by him in support of his contention. I do not want to speak on the legal aspect of his arguments. That is the work of the lawyers. What surprises me is his assertion that if we passed the Resolution now, we will finish our work without achieving what we desire. That puts me in mind of the days prior to 1920; when our Moderates were at a loss to know what to do and saw everywhere nothing but frustration and disappointment. We have not met here simply to sit together, talk a lot and then disperse without achieving any result. It will be our duty to see that we achieve results. Just at present it is not necessary to say what we are going to do and how far are going to proceed. Suffice it to say that we shall achieve speedy and substantial results. Dr Jayakar has spoken of war. The Congress people and the people, who believe in the principle of satyagraha always desire peace and no war. They, however, want true peace and not the peace of the graveyard.

The greatest gift that Mahatmaji has given to the world is Satyagraha. Satyagrahis want peace but when they see that true peace is impossible without having resort to war, they get ready to give their lives in a war of *Ahimsa*. I, therefore, say we do not want war. We want peace. We neither want to fight with the Muslims nor with the British Government. If, however, the British Government wishes to fight with us making Muslims their *Shikhandi*; we will not do what Bhisham Pitama did. We will not lay down our arms because a *Shikhandi* is made to stand against us. We do desire our brethren of the Muslim League to come and co-operate with us. If, however, with all our solicitations, with all our patience and with all our desire for peace, they do not come, we are not going to stop our work for them. Dr Jayakar has not told us whether our Muslim brethren would join us if we postponed the consideration of the Resolution till the 20th January. If we were assured that they would join us, Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru, I think, would perhaps, be the first person to say that if his Muslim brethren were coming in, he would postpone his Resolution.

Panditji told us in so many words that the Resolution was an undertaking -- a pledge. When one signs a pledge, he signs it with full sense of responsibility of what he was doing. As this Resolution is a pledge when we pass it, we will pass it with a full sense of our responsibility.

The Resolution speaks of a Republic. There may be a difference of opinion whether the Republic should be a democratic republic or a socialist republic. But, to discuss it as this juncture, would be meaningless. Whenever the world is in need of a thing it creates it. Keeping in view the condition of the world and the plight of India, we can say that our republic will both democratic and socialist. I desire to tell the people, who feel chary of socialism and tremble at hearing of its tenets, that not only the people who have nothing are miserable but the people who possess everything, are also in sorrow. The former are miserable because they labour under the desire to possess everything and the latter are unhappy because they have to resort to hundreds and thousands of knaveries and evasions. They perform acts that are not in the least considered fair in the eyes of justice. If these people, while ignoring justice, pretend to protect and champion it, I tell you, they never get true happiness. I am myself of the people who possess everything; but I feel that if true peace is to be realised, it can only be realised through socialism. No other system can give us true peace. There can be no doubt that our republic will be both democratic and socialist.

As to preventing us from doing this work; I desire to make it known that both the British Government and the Muslim League cannot stop us from doing what we intend to do. Our country is so vast and its population is so great that even the British Government cannot now put obstacles in the way of its freedom and progress.

To my brethren of the Muslim League, I desire to say some thing; and I say it with all the emphasis at my disposal, that if the British, who are foreigners, put obstacles in the path of our freedom, nobody in history, will hold them blameworthy; but, if persons, who are born in this country, who are bred in it, and who consume its produce, try to come in the way of its freedom, they will be censured by their own progeny. As for the British, they cannot block our way to freedom; but so far as our Muslim League brethren are concerned, they may take it from me in plain words that if they allied themselves with the British to keep this country in slavish subjugation, future generations will hold them blameworthy and they will get this stigma without stopping us from achieving our freedom.

If the British Government adhering to the Statements issued in the last few days, tried not to enact a new Government of India Act, in the light of the decisions of this Constituent Assembly, I tell them that their efforts in this respect are doomed to failure. They have always tried to keep India and other countries under their subjugation by not allowing them to solve their own problems. If, they played the same game with this country now, the time will perhaps never come for the presentation of a Government of India Act in the British Parliament and no Indo-British Treaty will ever be signed. I do not say this on behalf of the Congress. I see the future, when, if the British failed to translate the decisions of this Constituent Assembly into some solid form of action, a parallel government will be set up here and the whole of England will have to fight it. People coming from across the seven seas will not be able to win our war of *Ahimsa*. I fully believe in it.

I do not want to take more time; but before the chit comes to me asking me to stop, I appeal to you that you should pass this Resolution not as a resolution but as a pledge with full sense of responsibility of what you do and go forward in the manner of a free country.*

Mr Chairman: It is now 1 o'clock. The House stands adjourned till Eleven o'clock tomorrow morning. In the afternoon we have got a meeting of the Rules Committee and we shall not able to meet here.

The Assembly then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock, on Wednesday, the 18th December, 1946.

4. Wednesday, the 18th December 1946

RESOLUTION RE: AIMS AND OBJECTS—contd.

The Hon'ble Rev. J.J.M. Nichols-Roy (Assam: General): Mr President Sir, thank you for giving me this opportunity to speak on this Resolution. I stand here to support the Resolution moved by Pandit Nehru, with all the force that I can command. This Resolution contains all the principles that need to be enunciated in such a kind of Resolution to be placed before this House. First of all, it has stated the objective that we all in India have in our minds, that is, to proclaim at a certain date the independence of India. Here we have is, to proclaim at a certain date the independence of India. Here we have only resolved that we shall proclaim the independence of India and we have that firm resolve in our minds to get the independence of India. That is the desire of every one in India. I cannot imagine that there will be anybody in India from one end of India to the other end, who will be against that kind of objective. Then

*English translation of Hindustani speech ends.

it proclaims also that the kind of Constitution that we shall make will be a republican form of Government,—a democratic form of Government,—a Government by the people and for the people. That is surely the desire of all the people of India. It is true that there are some monarchies in India but we envisage the time when all these monarchies will become at least wholly constitutional monarchies like the Monarchy of England, and we believe that even the people of all the States envisage that in their own States there will be a democratic form of Government. Therefore there can be no objection at all to these declarations that we have in this Resolution. Then it speaks of the territories which will be included in the Union of India and it is comprehensive enough. Then in the third para. it speaks of autonomous units—that those autonomous units which are now autonomous according to present boundaries or with such other boundaries as they may have afterwards,—these units or territories will remain autonomous units together with residuary powers and will exercise all powers and functions of government and administration, save and except such powers which are assigned to the Central Government. This is our desire, this is the desire of all the people of this country. It is the object before us that each Province will be autonomous. In this connection, Sir, I want to say that it is very unfortunate that the idea of Sections was introduced in the Cabinet Mission Declaration and that in a Section according to the latest interpretation given by His Majesty's Government a certain Province will be outvoted by the majority of members of another Province. I speak especially in connection with Section 'C' which relates to Assam. Assam is a non-Muslim Province. There are 7 non-Muslims who are representatives of Assam in this Constituent Assembly and 3 are Muslims. I am sorry that my Muslim friends are not present here, in this Assembly. I wish they were here. In Bengal, Sir, there are 27 non-Muslims and 33 Muslims. If we are brought into a Section, there will be 36 Muslims and 34 non-Muslims and if the voting in that Section will be by a majority vote, a simple majority vote as interpreted by His Majesty's Government, it will mean that our Constitution, our Assam Constitution, will be framed by the majority of the people of Bengal, that is the Muslim League. We cannot conceive of anything that is so unjust as this, Sir, (*Cheers*). It is a matter which should be considered by all the members of this Constituent Assembly. When the Cabinet Mission made its Declaration, we in Assam thought that such kind of interpretation might be given in the future but we took it for granted that the Cabinet Mission would not be so unreasonable as to place Assam which is a non-Muslim Province to come under a Muslim Province and that our constitution would be framed by the majority of the members in the Section. We never thought that it would be like that, because we considered that it is unjust for the people of Assam to be placed in such a position. In the month of June 1946 we had a public meeting in Shillong. I happened to be the Chairman of that meeting. We were discussing about the Declaration of the Cabinet Mission and in that meeting I said this:

"From this paragraph 15 (v) of the Cabinet Mission's Declaration I understand that each Province has freedom to form or not into a group suggested by Cabinet Mission. Secondly, that the grouping will be, as independent provinces, to discuss what subjects could be taken as common subjects to be dealt with by the group. Thirdly, that if a province does not agree in regard to subjects which may affect it vitally, there will be no group constitution as recommended by para. 19 (v) of the Declaration. Fourthly, that if one province, in the discussion, finds it impossible to settle the question in the group, it will not be forced by a majority vote of the members of another Province. Fifthly, that the whole question will be brought before the whole Constituent Assembly which will have the power decide finally."

That is what we understood by the Declaration of the Cabinet Mission and, I believe, Sir, that was also the view which the Congress took at that time. I was very much gladdened by the declaration of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel the other day that the Congress had not up to the present time accepted the interpretation of His Majesty's Government. Sir, we still hold that position. It appears to me that the British Cabinet Mission has changed its mentality from what it was when they were here in India. When they were in India they were under certain circumstances and were influenced by the opinion at that time in this country. When they have gone back to England they are placed under a different circumstance, influenced by the Conservative Party there, and the force which Mr Jinnah has placed upon their minds. They have changed their opinion altogether. That is what appears to me. I would like to know from Lord Pethick-Lawrence whether in reality there was that idea in the minds of the Cabinet Mission when they were here in India. There was nothing in any of their declarations, in any of their writings that said that the vote in the Sections would be by a simple majority vote. The principle of driving by force a non-Muslim province to come under a Muslim province is absolutely wrong. Mr Jinnah has forced His Majesty's Government to commit this great injustice to our Province, and we feel, Sir, that we shall have the sympathy and support of this august body, that our Province may not be driven to that pitiable condition. I want Mr Jinnah and the League Members to be here and I want them to come here to take part in the framing of the constitution of India. I will expect him and all the others to be just. I do not want anything else except that they will act like gentlemen and be just. It is unjust, everybody knows, that we should be forced into such a position in which we are now placed by the recent interpretation of His Majesty's Government. We are an autonomous province and a non-Muslim province. Why should we be forced to go to that kind of a Section which could outvote the province of Assam a frame the Constitution according to the desire of the majority, created artificially. Now, Sir, it may be said that this will at once bring a conflict between the British Government and this Constituent Assembly. This need not be. Someone said to deviate from the four walls of the Declaration of May 16th and to give a different interpretation would be revolutionary. This Constituent Assembly need not adopt that attitude at all. I believe that we can adopt a friendly attitude. We shall say to the British Government: "We thank you for the good effort you made to bring a compromise between the Hindus and the Muslims. You have given to us good advice and made good recommendations. You have acted as makers of peace. We shall, as far as practicable, implement your recommendations. but we shall, like responsible persons, be free to deviate from them whenever we find it is impracticable and unjust to carry out literally to the letter any of your recommendations. We shall frame constitution which will do justice to all minorities and which shall not overlook any community. If the members of the Muslim League will co-operate, we shall heartily welcome them. After we have finished framing the constitution, the whole of India will get the opportunity to see what kind of constitution this Constituent Assembly has framed; we request you, British gentlemen, not to make speeches in Parliament which will suggest revolutionary activities in India. Kindly co-operate with us quietly until we finish our work, and then judge our work." Then only the British Government will have the opportunity to see what kind of a constitution this Assembly has framed. Then, and not till then, can they say that this Constituent Assembly has been just or unjust to a certain community or to the Muslims. We do expect that the Muslim community will come here and co-operate in framing the Constitution of India. There is no one who wishes their attendance here more than I do. I have some very good friends of mine among the members of the Muslim League and I would like to see them come here and co-operate with this Assembly.

I now turn to another portion of this Resolution, namely, paragraph 5 and before I do that, I must point out another thing. I envisage that in the autonomous Provinces there will be units in a Province which will be self-governing and which will be connected with a Province. This will be necessary no doubt, in a Province like Assam.

Now, to turn to paragraph 5. In this paragraph we have provisions regarding justice and freedom,—social justice, justice in the economic and political field, ensured to all. Political justice, no doubt, will mean that every community will get representation in the legislatures as well as in the administration of the country. Therefore, there need be no fear in the mind of any community that this Constituent Assembly will not look after their interests.

Then there is mention, here, of the freedom of thought, expression, belief, faith and worship. There was a propaganda made in this country by some parties that when there will be self-government in India, some religious faiths will not be allowed to propagate their faith. This is really false propaganda. This Resolution has declared that this will not be the case. There will be provision in the Constitution of India for the freedom of all religious faiths and for the propagation of those faiths according to their own desire. I am particularly glad that this paragraph speaks of association and action, subject to law and public morality. Public morality needs to be protected by Government and righteousness needs to be exalted. "Righteousness exalteth a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people".

I would like to speak on other points of this Resolution, but I don't think I need dwell on them at all. There are difficulties and hindrances before us. India is not an exception to difficulties of this nature; such difficulties confronted Canada, Australia and even the United States when they were engaged in the work of framing their constitutions, and some parts of those countries did not come into the constitution at the beginning, although they came in afterwards. That very same thing may be repeated here in India. We shall have to go on framing the constitution and then when that is placed before the world and before this country, it will then and then only be the proper time for the people of England or the British Government to say that it is not a constitution according to their Declaration. Before that happens, they should not try to prejudice what this Constituent Assembly will do and thus cause obstruction to its work.

Mr Chairman: The Hon'ble Member has exceeded his time.

The Hon'ble Rev. J.J.M. Nichols-Roy: I want to speak on only one more point, which has impressed me from the speech of Viscount Simon in the House of Lords. Viscount Simon has said that this Constituent Assembly, if it carries on the work of framing a constitution for India, will "threaten" India "with a Hindu Raj". I was only very much surprised when I saw these words in a newspaper this morning. When I was in western countries—in England and also America, I was impressed by the fact that some people in those countries had an idea that a Hindu is a man who is steeped in his caste system and who worships a cow. If this is the idea which Viscount Simon has when he refers Hindu Raj, *i.e.*, that the people of India will be forced to perpetuate the caste system and to worship a cow, then he is entirely wrong. If the people who are assembled here, —whether they be Hindus, Muslims, or Christians, or whatever other religion they may profess— if they frame constitution which will be a democratic constitution, which will do justice to everybody, why should that constitution be called a Hindu Raj? And if by 'Hindu' is meant people who live in India, surely we should have a constitution for the people of India. That is exactly what we want: we want a constitution to be made by the people of India, but if some people in India do not want to come into the constitution just now, they will come afterwards and I envisage a time when they will all enter into this constitution

and make India one country,—one united country,—with a democratic form of government. I have faith that all these hindrances will be removed by prayer to God. Let us follow the example of Mahatma Gandhiji—our Bapuji and pray to God. Let us pray to God that all these hindrances may be removed from our way and that we may be able to carry on the work of framing a constitution which will be a blessing to our whole country.

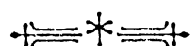
Mr R.K. Sidhwa (CP and Berar: General): Mr Chairman, Sir, the demand made by the Indian National Congress for framing a constitution for free India has now become an accomplished fact. We are here to frame a constitution for India and we are sure—whether our friends the Muslim Leaguers whom we welcome—speaker after speaker has stated that they miss their presence here—whether they come in or not, let me state, that with all the threats that have been now thrown at us by the Britishers during the last four or five days in the House of Commons and the House of Lords we shall proceed with our business and shall frame a constitution which they dare not refuse to implement. If they choose not to implement it when the occasion arises for them to do so, then we know how to implement it. Sir, if poverty has to be eradicated from India, to bring human happiness to this country and our constitution should be based on the socialist principle and such a constitution, I am confident when it is completed will be welcomed by all in this country and also outside this country. Much fetish has been made many a time about the minority question. Sir, all reasonable safeguards and all interests will be reasonably considered while framing this constitution but I do not understand why the question is brought to the forefront. In this very resolution, in paragraph 3, you will see how we have safeguarded, without anybody else's telling us, the interests of the minorities. Paragraph 4 relates to residuary powers, which we have accepted, not because the British Delegation want us to do so. This matter had been receiving the serious consideration of the Congress, as you know, Sir, for a number of years, and to allay the fears of the Muslim Leaguers, we came to a decision in August 1942 that there should be residuary powers in the provinces. Many of us even to-day do not like the residuary powers to be vested in the provinces; we want a strong Central Government. If a free vote is taken in this House or in the country, they will oppose residuary powers being vested in the provinces. But simply because we want to allay the fears of the Muslim League, imaginary or real, we respect their feeling and accepted that residuary powers shall vest in the provinces. May I ask who came forward to safeguard the interests of the minorities? It is the Congress and the majority community that have said that the provinces shall have residuary powers. Whether leaguers are here or not, as Hon'ble Congressmen we will stick to that resolve. We do not want to go back, even if the Muslim League choose to remain absent upon that pledge; even though we do not like it we shall implement it. That is one instance that I want to point out to the Britishers when they tell us how we are ourselves alert in safeguarding the interests of the minorities. But if you make unreasonable demands, it is certainly not possible for the majority community to be converted into a minority community. In this very paragraph there is a reference regarding redistribution of provinces. I am a firm believer in the redistribution of the present provinces. (*Hear, hear*). The present heterogeneous way in which, without any thought, or without any sense these provinces have been formed, requires immediate revision. Coming from the Province of Sind, as I do, I know ten years ago when we were separated from Bombay there was 22 crores of rupees of debt to the Government of India. We have wiped off that debt in 7 years—I do not want to enter into the details of the advantages that we have achieved by separation. But what I would state is that this paragraph is so guardedly framed as to respect the feelings of the Mussalmans, so that the present provinces

may be taken into consideration in going into Sections. If I were free I would suggest an amendment that the provinces should be redistributed straightaway and the boundary commission appointed immediately and then the constitution should be framed. But here also we want to keep to our promise to go into Sections within the framework of the Declaration of May 16. I point out these things in order to show to the world that without any interference or dictation or advice that has been given to us day in and day out in the House of Commons and in the House of Lords—the mischievous statements and mischievous speeches that are being heard from the British to-day,—we do our legitimate duty. We cannot tolerate this kind of propaganda, which have falsely raised the question of minorities and raised the usual bogey of communal disturbances. When the Delegation came they were in a different mood because there were political riots. The army, the navy and the air force were in revolt before they came. It was a political riot. Now, Sir, the Services in India feel that their days are numbered. They have started making capital of communal disturbances. Now that there is communal tension the British Cabinet want to go back upon what they stated when they came over here. The British Government have told us that, if we do not frame the constitution according to their interpreting clause 15, it shall not be forced upon the minority community. I come from the minority communities, it is a very small minority comparatively an insignificant number, but still that community, as the world knows, although we are a lakh of Parsis only—the Parsi community is known all over the whole world. As Bapu Purushottam Das Tandon pointed out in seconding the Resolution, in the earlier days of this country's history, whosoever came in this country were welcome. 1300 years ago when we were driven away from Iran so the history say, and were wandering in the sea for three months, nobody gave us a shelter excepting the Jadhwa Rana Sanjan in Guzerat. We are grateful to him. We have had no grievance against the Hindu community, so long as we have been here. The Parsis have taken prominent part in politics, social and industrial enterprises; amongst the founders of the Indian Congress that great man Dadabhoy Naoroji was one. (*Cheers*). In 1909 from the presidential address in Calcutta he coined the word "Swaraj". Parsis were the pioneers in the industry of shipbuilding and textiles. They were the first to introduce female education, so in charitable organisation like hospitals irrespective of caste and creed. As recently as 30 years ago the Iron and Steel industry of India which is the second largest in the whole world was started by the Tata family. I do not say all this to glorify my community. All I want to show is that the majority community have never forgotten us: and on our part we have not lagged behind in taking part. We were forced by the British people to ask for separate electorates. We have refused. In the general electorate our community's interests are absolutely safe. I know of an instance where 30 years ago the mischief of separate representation was forced for the purpose of upholding British rule in this country. I find we had in the local bodies general representation without any communal representation. The then Commissioner of Sind called some of the Mussalmans to the Government House and told them secretly, "You give us a representation of Bombay". Such representation was given and ever since there are separate electorates in our Sind Municipality. Thus, we have seen with our own eyes how mischief is played by the British by dividing one community against another. Parsis have been asked many a time to demand separate electorates. We have refused and replied, "We are quite safe with our majority community." See the goodness of the majority community in this very Assembly. We have all been all elected by their votes. May I say that those who opposed our cherished goal for they have also elected by the majority community. We do not consider anybody a foe although they may have opposed our cherished views or cherished demand. I mean the Anglo Indians, yet we have elected them. This is a

magnanimity which one ought to appreciate. What kind of safeguard do the Britishers want unless it is to create the usual old mischief? But let me tell the British Government, the time has come when this mischievous propaganda that is being carried on intentionally to-day to disturb the Constituent Assembly work cannot help them. We shall proceed with our work. We shall proceed in spite of the difficulties and hurdles and machinations that have been carried on in season and out of season, particularly at this juncture. Instead of Sir Stafford Cripps or the Secretary of State telling Mr Jinnah "You got the interpretation of particular clause, as you want and you must stop the propaganda of Pakistan." The Cabinet Mission discussed, investigated and have come to the conclusion that Pakistan is neither feasible practicable nor advisable and therefore that question is buried once and for all. Yet now in the Parliament during the recent debate have you said a single word to Mr Jinnah, to stop making speeches of pernicious, poisonous propaganda on Pakistan? Mr Jinnah, day in and day out, whenever he goes either to a press conference or in his statements, goes on reiterating the story of Pakistan. We do not know therefore what he wants notwithstanding the decision that the British Delegation has given in their Statement of May 16.

Unless the British Government want to go back upon it, they should tell Mr Jinnah to stop this propaganda, poisoning the minds of the people which causes communal disturbances in this country. Instead of telling him so, they have the Effrontery to give advice to the minority community. We cannot understand what is it that they really want and what is it that is working in their mind. Was it to frustrate our object of meeting here on 9th December that they invited the Muslim League to London? But, all honour to our leaders; they stuck to their decision to hold the first meeting of the Constituent Assembly on 9th December despite the fact that the Hon'ble Pandit Nehru had to go to England the previous week, assuring us that he would return on 9th December and participate in the opening ceremony of the Constituent Assembly. We have been thwarted in many ways. They want to stop our work. That is clear from the speeches delivered in the Parliament. A day ago we were told "You can go to the Federal Court, and take decision soon". Next day the Secretary of State says: "You may go to the Federal Court; but we are not bound by any decision, that the Court takes". Have we not met here in very large numbers in this Assembly? We will go on with our work. We will face any difficulty that arises and try to solve it as we have done in the past. We have already prevented great harm being done to the major community. We have done that in the past and we shall do that again in order to bring solidarity and drive away the British people from this country. We can do that.

But let me ask why is the Muslim League remaining out? They want the British people to tell us that even if we assemble here and frame a constitution, they would not implement it. Let them say so. We will draw up a constitution and place it before the bar of public opinion. We have in this world unbiassed countries of unbiassed mind who will judge our actions rightly, justly and truly. Only a jaundiced eye will see everything yellow and wrong. In the South African dispute the United Nations Organisation Delegates supported our just cause although Britishers opposed us. Our cause is just, we shall proceed with our work and prepare a Constitution which will be one to be proud of. (*Applause*).



5. Thursday, the 19th December 1946

RESOLUTION *RE*: AIMS AND OBJECTS—contd.

Mr Somnath Lahiri (Bengal: General): Mr Chairman, The Right Hon'ble Dr Jayakar, grown grey in the service of interpreting British Imperialist laws, has probably interpreted the limitations of the Cabinet Mission Plan correctly. The limitations, as he says, are probably correct. But we need not be frightened by them. Dr Jayakar wants to wait for their Highnesses, the Princes, to come in and have a hand in distorting our future freedom. We need not have that. We do not want the Princes, the autocratic Princes, to come in and have a hand in distorting our future. Of course, so far as the Muslim League is concerned, that is on a different footing altogether. But I am not sorry that the Muslim League is not here; I am only sorry that the Congress also has not gone out of the British Plan and left the British Plan to itself, to stew in its own juice. Agreement with the Muslim League for gaining independence of our country and for drafting a really free constitution of our country, is essential. But if you think that by waiting for the Muslim League, or by the Congress remaining here and the Muslim League remaining outside, you will be able to have a properly framed constitution, I am afraid you are sadly mistaken and you are counting without your host, the British imperialists, who have made this Plan. You have seen the example of the Interim Government. Both the League and the Congress are there, but that has not solved the problem of our quarrels and internecine warfare in this country. It has happened there just as the British wanted it to happen, that is, they wanted the parties to fight against each other with the prospect of the British giving support in one party's favour against the other with the result that in between these quarrels the British become more firmly entrenched.

Well, the Interim Government has not brought peace nor freedom to our country. Similarly, whether the Congress is inside this British made Constituent Assembly and the Muslim League is out or whether the Congress and the Muslim League are both inside this British-made Constituent Assembly and working the British plans as the British should like it to be worked out, then also the same thing will follow, *viz*, the quarrelling that is there to-day in the country, will only get more intensified inside this Assembly also. That is all and nothing else. Therefore, Sir, I am not sorry that the League is not here but I am only sorry that the Congress also has not gone out leaving the plan to stew in its own juice.

Well, Sir, I must congratulate Pandit Nehru for the fine expression he gave to the spirit of the Indian people when he said that no imposition from the British will be accepted by the Indian people. Imposition would be resented and objected to, he said and he added that if need be we will walk the valley of struggle. That is very good, Sir—bold words, noble words. But the point is to see when and how are you going to apply that challenge. Well, Sir, the point is that the imposition is here right now. Not only has the British Plan made any future Constituent—provided you are able to evolve out something which I very much doubt—even if you were able to evolve out something, not only is it dependent on a treaty satisfactory to the Britisher but it suggests that for every little difference you will have to run to the Federal Court or dance attendance there in England or to call on Attlee or someone else. Not only is it a fact that this Constituent Assembly, whatever plans we may be hatching, we, are under the shadow of British guns, British Army, their economic and financial stranglehold which means that the final power is still in the British hands and the question of power has not yet been finally decided, which means the future is not yet completely in our hands. Not only that, but the

statements made by Attlee and others recently, have made it clear that if need be, they will even threaten you with division entirely. This means, Sir, there is no freedom in this country. As Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel put it some days ago, we have freedom only to fight among ourselves. That is the only freedom we have got and the only other freedom that I noticed is on the order paper of the day where Pandit Nehru is the Hon'ble Pandit Nehru and I suppose Pandit Nehru has not even the freedom to drop that honour. Therefore I say it is no use your thinking that from within the limitations of this British Plan, one part of which is the Interim Government and the other part of which is this Constitution-making procedure, I don't think you will be able to get any independence out of it. The insolence of the Britishers, as you have recently seen, and to which expression has been given by various Members of the House, why is this insolence so growing, it is for the patriots to see. The insolence is growing because they find that the great parties of our country, the Congress and the Muslim League, go on thinking that in getting our parties, my party's claim as against the other party. I will be able to get the help of the British. They want you to go on quarrelling with the only result that fratricidal fights follow, as it has happened to-day throughout the country, as it is happening everyday before your very eyes. Our strength against the British gets decimated and nothing of freedom comes our way. Only we kill each other as if we are enemies instead of being brothers and Mr Alexander gets the cheek to say in this month of 1946 in the House of Commons that the use of the Special powers of the Viceroy has not been changed and whatever power is available there, it is there to back it. Therefore, our humble suggestion is that it is not a question of getting something by working out this Plan but to declare independence here and now and call upon the Interim Government call upon the people of India to stop fratricidal warfare and look out against its enemy, which still has the whip hand the British Imperialism—and go together to fight it and then resolve our claims afterwards when we will be free. As a matter of fact, Sir, we have found in the long history of our struggle for the freedom of the country that when we are faced to the British, even though we might disagree very much among ourselves, quarrels are generally resolved, no obstacles are put to the man who is fighting the British. It is a way out of the present fratricidal impasse. Mr Chairman, Sir, and the Mover of the Resolution, I would address him also, that Doctor Jayakar, the finely logician and a cruel logician that he is, has placed before you the only alternatives when he has told you that either we have to work through the limitations of the British Plan or you have to go forward to the seizure of power, revolutionary seizure of power. I say, you go forward first of all to drive out the British, to drive out the British Viceroy, to drive out their troops, etc., which are holding their guns even now over our heads.

Sri Raj Krushna Bose (Orissa: General): We have a right to know whether the speaker is supporting the Resolution or opposing it. I am afraid all that he is saying at this time is not relevant.

Mr Somnath Lahiri: That is for the Chairman to decide. I hope I represent a political party which is the third largest in the country ... (Laughter from Back Benches). Mr Chairman, I hope you will let me continue without interruption. Our party got 7 lakhs of votes ... (Interruption) ... in the last General Elections. It is true that it is not a big party but it is the third largest party surely (Renewed laughter).

Mr Chairman: I hope the House will allow the Speaker to proceed. (To Mr Lahiri) But I would remind you of the time-limit and also of the fact that you should confine yourself to the subject in question.

Mr Somnath Lahiri: Yes, Sir, I am coming to the point. I hope you will allow me, Sir, the same facilities as you allowed to Dr Ambedkar or other party leaders. (Laughter from Back Benches).

Mr Chairman: It is true that I did show some leniency to them, but the House was in a mood to listen to them, but it does not seem to be in that mood now. I have to be guided by the mood of the House.

Mr Chairman: You may go ahead.

Shri Vishwambhar Dayal Tripathi (United Provinces: General): Sir, we must know whether he is supporting the Resolution or he is supporting the amendment.

Mr Somnath Lahiri: The more interruptions there are ...

Mr Chairman: Members will draw their own inferences as to whether he is supporting the Resolution or opposing it or doing neither.

Mr Somnath Lahiri: I will make it quite clear. You will know it when you listen to my speech. Sir, coming to the third para. of the original Resolution, I understand that you desire the unity of India. It is out of that desire you have given this right of autonomy and residuary power in paragraph 3 but refused right of secession to linguistic, etc., units. I am also as much eager for the unity of India as you are, but the point is: can you get that unity by means of force or by compulsion? I come from Bengal. Look at Bengal. In Bengal the overwhelming majority is Muslim, are ground down under the double slavery of British Imperialism and the Hindu Upper Class. Now, Sir, in the image of freedom that the Bengal peasants and the Bengali Muslim has before his mind's eye, if he wants that neither British Imperialists nor Hindu Upper Class can exploit him, if he wants that his land—the Bengali speaking territory—should be free and sovereign, free from the control of any other party of India—can you deny that right of freedom to him? You cannot. And if the Muslim League—the reactionary section of the leadership of the Muslim League—are able to distort this freedom urge of the Bengali Muslim into religious separatism, or into demanding the Assamese speaking territory, I should say the responsibility for this is on the Congress leadership. Why? Because the Congress has never unequivocally recognised this right of separation of the nationalities on national-linguistic basis and whatever recognition there was in the ruling of the Congress President that no territorial unit of India will be compelled against its wish to come into the Indian Union, you have given the final good-bye to that in this Resolution. You have said here that no unit, however strong its wish might be to go out of India, can go out. The utmost it can hope for is residuary powers and autonomy. Well, Sir, this is not the way by which you would hope to win over the Muslim population of Bengal. This is not the way you would hope to win over the other nationalities which will come into the forefront as time goes by. So you cannot achieve the unity of India by forcing a unitary constitution on them and if you look at the constitutions of recent days in the world you will find as in Yugoslavia, in Czechoslovakia, etc., that they recognise the rights of self-determination including that of separation. For instance, in Yugoslavia the very first article of their new Constitution gives the right of self-determination and separation to the Serbs, Croats, Slovenes, Montenegrins, etc., to the full. That is why today in Europe you find that though Yugoslavia is a small country, yet it is the most united and advancing most rapidly.

Now, Sir, I have heard some Congressmen say that "Well, this right of separation and self-determination we will give, but only later, if the Muslim League presses for it." Now, Sir, would

it not be worst political opportunism to higggle with the rights of peoples across the bargaining counter if the bargain was pressed? Is it not better that you put it clearly and in unequivocal terms not for the leaders but for the people—the Muslim people—to see for themselves and have some faith, some guarantee that they may safely come into the Indian Union?

The next point that I would deal with is paragraphs 4, 5 and 6 of this Original Resolution. Well, Sir, here you have formulated certain fundamental principles on which the equality and the rights of the people of India would be based. Good. Good intention. Nobody denies the good intention. But the path to hell is often paved with good intentions and the intentions here may mean everything of many mean nothing. It all depends on how you interpret those principles, in the light of the past and the future. You have said everybody will be equal before law. You have said that full legal rights will be given to everybody. At the same time history tells you there are popular Ministries in this country, the Congress has got Ministries, and even then you find in Bombay people being externed, even women being externed as goondas without bringing them into court. At the same time, you find in U.P. a law being framed where by detentions can take place without trial. At the same time, you find in Bengal a law being framed under the name of communalism which takes out the liberty of every newspaper and everybody. Now, Sir, people will look at your formulations here in the light of their past experience and if you want these things to be really what you wanted them to be, you ought to have been more explicit and stated clearly what you want. Similarly about the Depressed Classes. You have said that adequate safeguards will be provided. Good. But who is going to determine and when are they going to determine whether the safeguards are adequate or not? Everybody deplores the religious separatism that obtains today in our country. Everybody deplores that, but what is the political provision that you have given in your Resolution to them and to their aspirations?

An Hon'ble Member: What do you suggest?

Mr Somnath Lahiri: Well, I would suggest proportional representation with adult suffrage and joint electorates in any election that might take place in the future and thereby each party, whether it be a communal party or a political party, on the basis of the total votes gained by it, will get its representation assured and then the parties, the communal parties like Muslim League and the Scheduled Castes Federation, who would have been assured of their proper representation, could not have any complaint. At the same time, it would give a fillip to the political parties also to get their proper representation, so that we can gradually cut across the religious separatism that has grown in our country, and healthy politics on the basis of political division and political struggle would develop. But you have not made the point clear. I hope you will make it clear when you draw up the fundamentals of the Constitution. You must remember that the people will judge you by your past,—by your immediate past which I am sorry to say, in spite of the good programme of the Congress, in spite of the hard struggle of the Congress, has not been up to its professions. I hope that they will be remedied when you are drawing up the future Constitution.

Mr H.V. Kamath (CP and Berar: General): I submit, Sir, that Mr Lahiri when speaking on his own amendment was ruled out of order by you, and is he in order now in doing the same?

Mr Somnath Lahiri: I have every right to develop my argument. However, I have almost finished and I will take only a minute or two. This Resolution, apart from the generality and the good thing that is in it—I should have liked that you had made the proclamation here and

now of our independence. Every Indian would agree with the first paragraph that India should be a sovereign independent power. Apart from these things, your Resolution, to sum up politically, is a resolution of pressure. Part of the pressure is against the British. It tells the British, "Look here! If you think we are going to listen to you, to whatever you dictate, you are very much mistaken. We are going to evolve a constitution of our own for India." Good. Put that more strongly if you like, but the other part of the Resolution is against the Muslim League, "Look here. If you think that there is separation waiting for you, you are mistaken. We are going to evolve out a unitary constitution for India and there is no scope in it for separation." That is pressure against the Muslim League. I do not think the second pressure helps you to increase the first pressure. The more we press against our brothers, the more we fight against the Mussalmans, the more the British are able to deny us what we want. You increase the pressure as much as you can against the British, but do not increase this pressure against your own brothers. Well, Sir, Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru has spoken of the magic of the moment. Yes, magic. But it is the magic of the British witch which lulls patriots to sleep, the magic of the British witch whose bloody talons the blood of countless martyrs is dripping and yet she is able to make the patriot think that he will get his claim against the other party by working her magic plan. I hope that the Congress patriot will remember that and go forward in his struggle against the witch's plan, against British imperialism and not against the Mussalmans.

Mrs Hansa Mehta (Bombay: General): Sir, I consider it a proud privilege to speak in support of this historic Resolution so ably moved by Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru. I do not wish to refer to the issue raised by Dr Jayakar or speak on the speeches made six thousand miles away by people who either mean mischief or are totally ignorant of the real situation. I wish to offer a few remarks on that part of this Resolution, —the fundamental rights which affect a section of the people, namely, women.

It will warm the heart of many a woman to know that free India will mean not only equality of status but equality of opportunities. It is true that a few women in the past even to-day enjoy high status and have received the highest honour that any man can receive, like our friend, Mrs Sarojini Naidu. But these women are few and far between. One shallow does not make a summer. These women do not give us a real picture of the position of Indian women in this country.

The average woman in this country has suffered now for centuries from inequalities heaped upon her by laws, customs and practices of people who have fallen from the heights of that civilisation of which we are all so proud, and in praise of which Dr Sir S. Radhakrishnan has always spoken. There are thousands of women to-day who are denied the ordinary human rights. They are put behind the purdah, secluded within the four walls of their homes, unable to move freely. The Indian woman has been reduced to such a state of helplessness that she has become an easy prey of those who wish to exploit the situation. In degrading women, man has degraded himself. In raising her man will not only raise himself but raise the whole nation. Mahatma Gandhi's name has been invoked on the floor of this House. It would be ingratitude on my part if I do not acknowledge the great debt of gratitude that Indian women owe to Mahatma Gandhi for all that he has done for them. In spite of which I have the honour to belong has never asked for reserved seats, for quotas or for separate electorates. What we have asked for is social justice, economic justice, and political justice. We have asked for that equality which can alone be the basis of mutual respect and understanding and without which real co-operation is not possible between man and woman. Women form one-half of the population of

this country and, therefore, men cannot go very far without the co-operation of women. This ancient land cannot attain its rightful place, its honoured place in this world without the co-operation of women. I therefore welcome this Resolution for the great promise which it holds, and I hope that the objective embodied in the Resolution will not remain on paper but will be translated into reality. (*Cheers*).

Mr P.R. Thakur (Bengal: General): Mr Chairman, Sir, Dr Ambedkar did not say anything to speak to the Members of the Constituent Assembly on behalf of the Scheduled Castes in general of India. I stand here to support the Resolution moved by Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru. After analysing the whole of the Resolution and examining it in detail, I find that it is the best document that has ever extended hopes to the minds of the people of India for freedom. Some of my friends who have spoken before have pointed out some defects in it. Nevertheless, the Resolution as it stands before us will serve to solve many of the problems that have got to be solved before drawing up a constitution. I do feel there are many obstacles in our way, but we know we shall have to surmount them. If we look back into the history of the democratic nations of the world, we would see that every constitution-making body had to face very many difficulties and sometimes deadlocks. But still, they were successful at the end.

It is a pity that our Muslim League friends have kept themselves out and are not taking part in the deliberations of this Assembly. But when we know that we, Hindus and Muslims, will have to live in this country of ours, we shall have to solve our differences amicably by some way or other. It is hoped that the Muslim League members will, sooner or later, take up their rightful places in this Assembly, join in the deliberations and help in framing a constitution that will be acceptable to all.

Sir, in this big august House of the Constituent Assembly, we belonging to the Depressed Classes are very few in number, but in the country as a whole our population is 60 millions. We are no doubt a part and parcel of the great Hindu community. But our social status in the country is so very low that we do feel that we require adequate safeguards to be provided for us. Firstly, we should be considered as a minority—a minority, not in the sense in which is a separate political entity. It is needless however to point out that we are a separate political entity. I think those who have got themselves interested in the uplift of the Depressed Classes will admit, as Mahatma Gandhi himself has admitted by his words and deeds, that adequate safeguards are necessary for these classes for their political salvation. The Poona Pact is Mahatma Gandhi's creation, and his writings in the 'Harijan' amply prove that 'the interests of the Depressed Classes must be carefully looked after.

The Cabinet Mission's Statement of May 16 does not say anything about the Depressed Classes; but the Press Conference that the British Cabinet Ministers had, after the publication of the Statement in Delhi, clearly shows that the Depressed Classes should be regarded as a minority. The subsequent debates on India in the House of Commons as well as in the House of Lords have also laid stress on the importance of providing safeguards for the Depressed Classes as a minority.

Sir, the minority problem is one of the most intricate problems, specially in a country like India, where so many elements live together 'with so many different kinds of interests. I believe this Constituent Assembly will have to face very important problems in regard to the minorities and find satisfactory solutions for them. If this is done the house will have no difficulty in framing a constitution ultimately. We the members of the Depressed Classes do hope that this

Constituent Assembly will do justice to us. They want representation on a population basis in the Legislatures in the Centre, Provinces and the States. They do not claim any weightage, but if any weightage is given to any community, they demand proportional weightage for them.

Para. 4 of the Resolution says that—

“all power and authority of the Sovereign Independent India, its constituent parts and organs of government, are derived from the people.”

I think this is the best part of the Resolution. It would infuse real strength into the minds of the common people of India. The people of India might not be as much politically conscious as the people of other democratic countries; but the very idea that all the power of the State will come from the people will make the Depressed Classes of India politically conscious quickly. Para. 7 of the Resolution says—

“Whereby shall be maintained the integrity of the territory of the Republic ...”

This is also very important. We the Depressed Classes are the original inhabitants of this country. We do not claim to have come to India from outside as conquerors, as do the Caste Hindus and the Muslims. As a matter of fact, India belongs to us and we cannot tolerate the idea that this ancient mother country of ours will be divided between the Muslims and the Caste Hindus only.

I come from Bengal. Many of you might have heard of the civil disturbances over there. The Depressed Classes were the worst sufferers. We strongly repudiate any claim of the Muslim League to take away our beloved Bengal and constitute her into Pakistan. We also oppose the idea of grouping. We shall fight tooth and nail to maintain the integrity of India intact. I hope better sense will prevail on the Muslim League soon.

In this connection I cannot but say that the leaders of the Muslim League in Bengal are trying to get the support of a section of the Depressed Classes by jostling leaders of their choice over them. I think they are doing it just to pave the way for their fantastic Pakistan. But, fortunately, this section of the Depressed Classes is very small. I do hope that this Constituent Assembly will see that nothing is done in regard to Bengal without the consent of the Depressed Classes. They are of overwhelming number.

Lastly, I cannot but express my joy that very soon India will be free. The time has come for it. There is no power on earth which could stop it. Some of my friends, especially Dr Ambedkar, said that there would be civil war in the country before India gets freedom. The Depressed Classes will be very glad to meet it. As a matter of fact they are ready to face it.

With these few words I support the Resolution moved by the Hon'ble Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru.

Mr Chairman: I propose to call upon Sir Alladi Krishnaswami Ayyar to speak next; but as he is not in a position to stand up and speak, I permit him to sit and speak. I hope the House has no objection to that.

Honourable Members: No objection.

Diwan Bahadur Sir Alladi Krishnaswami Ayyar (Madras: General): Sir after the eloquent speech of our leader, the Hon'ble Pandit Nehru, on the main Resolution and the eloquent speeches of other speakers on the amendment of the Right Hon'ble Dr Jayakar, I shall try to be as brief as possible.

In support of his amendment, my Right Hon'ble Friends Dr Jayakar has raised various points, not all of which, I am afraid, are consistent with one another. His first point was that at this session, it was only competent for the Constituent Assembly to determine the order of business and that it should immediately resolve itself into 'A', 'B' and 'C' sections, as the Statement of the Cabinet Mission did not contemplate the transaction of any other business than merely determining the order of business. Secondly, he raised a doubt as to whether it is at all competent for this Assembly and in any event advisable to pass a resolution before the representatives of the Muslim League decided to come in. Lastly, he raised a point that before the State representatives come in, it may not be right for this Assembly to pass such a Resolution.

None of these points, I venture to say, has any validity. In regard to the first, the Statement of the Cabinet Mission is not in the nature of a Statute which purports to lay down every detail as to the steps to be taken by the Constituent Assembly in the matter of framing a constitution for India. In the language of the Cabinet Mission themselves, their object was merely to settle a machinery whereby a constitution can be settled by Indians for Indians. It is inconceivable that any constitution can be framed or steps taken in that regard without a directing objective which the Assembly has to set before itself. The formulating of such a directing objective does not of course in any way involve this Assembly deviating or departing from the main principles of the Cabinet Statement. You may search in vain for the proceedings of any Constituent Assembly or Convention which has not formulated such a purpose at the commencement of its proceedings. I do not therefore propose to further elaborate the point as to what exactly is the connotation of the expression 'order of business' in the Cabinet Statement.

Now as to the merits of the Resolution itself: There is nothing in the terms of the Resolution to which either the Muslims or the States can take exception if they decide to come in. In fact, neither of these two parties would have a place in this Assembly unless they subscribe to the objective of an independent India. The Statement of the Cabinet Mission in several paragraphs declares that the Constituent Assembly "is committed to the task of framing a constitution for an independent India." They make an appeal in paragraph 24 of the Statement that "the leaders of the people of India have now the opportunity of complete independence" and they say that "they trust that the proposals will enable the people of India to attain their independence in the shortest time." The Statement of the Cabinet Mission, in so many terms, declares that "the new independent India may choose to be a member of the British Commonwealth or not" and in any event they express the hope that "India will remain in close and friendly association with the British people". There is nothing to prevent republican India from being a member of the British Commonwealth as is the case with Ireland. In fact, it is common knowledge that the conception of British Commonwealth is undergoing change year by year and day by day owing to the force of international events. The Muslim League has, on several occasions, expressed itself that it is as strongly for independence as the Congress. We have no right in this House to read between the lines and presume that Muslim India does not mean what it says for this purpose. The only issue that was raised by the Muslim League was in regard to Pakistan. On that, the Cabinet Mission's Statement is definitely committed to a single Indian Union. It is only if the Muslim League subscribes to the article of a single Indian Union that the Members of the Muslim League have or could have any place in the Constituent Assembly. There is no guarantee nor any indication that the postponement of the Resolution to some day next month will be a factor in the Muslim League making up their mind in joining the deliberations of this Assembly. The argument, therefore, derived from the Muslim League

staying away from the present Constituent Assembly and the possibility of their coming in at a later stage has no validity on the propriety of the Resolution before the House.

Then as to the States: Here again, the States or the States Representatives have a place in this Assembly only if they subscribe to the creed and article of an independent India and if they are committed to the task of framing a constitution for an independent India. Otherwise, they have no place. They must choose to be constituent parts of an independent India or not. If they come in, it can only be on the footing that they are as much committed to the ideal and purpose of framing a constitution for an independent India as we in what is now British India. While I realise that there may be a certain incongruity in the States coming in only at a later stage in the proceedings of this Assembly—that is not our making—it cannot stand in the way of this Assembly formulating its objective in the form of a resolution at this stage, a resolution which does not commit this Assembly to anything beyond what is contained in the Statement of the Cabinet Mission. Has this Assembly begun to function or not? Or is it in a state of suspended animation until the State representatives choose to come in? We have elected our Chairman; we are proceeding to frame rules of business and we have begun the work of framing a constitution for an independent India. How can it be said that this Assembly has not begun to function? Is there any logic in the argument that the Assembly must not formulate its objective until some other party comes in or can come in? An independent India cannot, as was forcibly pointed out by Pandit Nehru, be a monarchy. The executive head of the Union cannot be a hereditary monarch, Hindu, Muslim or Sikh. He can only be an integral part of a Republication constitution.

There is no substance either in the objection raised on behalf of the States in certain quarters outside the House to paragraph 4 of the Resolution that—

“all power and authority of the sovereign independent India, its constituent parts and organs of Government are derived from the people.”

Is it suggested that in respect of the sovereign independent India, the authority of the provincial parts is derived from the people, and, so far as States are concerned, from the hereditary rulers of the States? The constitution of a sovereign independent India is the concrete expression of the will of the people of India as a whole conceived of as an organic entity, and even in regard to the units themselves, the authority of the rulers can rest ultimately only on the will of the people concerned. The State machinery, be it monarchy or democracy, ultimately derives its sanction from the will of the people concerned. The Divine Right of Kings is not a legal or political creed in any part of the world at the present day. I do not believe that it will be possible for hereditary monarchs to maintain their authority on such a mediaeval or archaic creed. The Cabinet Mission was quite alive to this and in their Statement, reference is made throughout to Indians, meaning thereby Indians both of the Indian States and British India, deciding the future constitution of India, no distinction being drawn between Indians in what is now native State territory. I need only refer to paragraphs 1, 3, 16 and 24 of the Statement of the Cabinet Mission.

There was one other minor point which formed the subject of criticism, *viz.*, non-reference to groups in the Resolution, by Dr Ambedkar, who I am glad to say has made a most useful contribution to the debate by giving his unqualified support to a United India. A close examination of the Cabinet Mission's Statement will point to the conclusion that the formation of groups is not an essential part of the constitutional structure. In the most material parts, the main recommendations are that there should be a Union of India dealing with certain subjects,

that all subjects other than the Union subjects and residuary powers should vest in the Provinces and in the States, the States being assimilated to the position of provinces under the Cabinet Mission Scheme. There is nothing in the terms of the Resolution to prevent Provinces from forming themselves into Groups as contemplated by the Cabinet Mission. There was a further comment as to the reference to 'justice, social, economic and political' being too thin. The expression 'justice, social economic and political', while not committing this country and the Assembly to any particular form of polity coming under any specific designation, is intended to emphasise the fundamental aim of every democratic State in the present day. The Constituent framed will, I have no doubt, contain the necessary elements of growth and adjustment needed for a progressive society. After all, we have to remember that what we are dealing with it a Resolution setting out the main object of this Assembly and not a Preamble to a Statute.

Without embarking upon a meticulous examination of the different parts of the Resolution, what is important is that at this session we must be in a position to proclaim to our people and to the civilised world what we are after. It has to be remembered that the main object of this Assembly is not the fashioning of a constitution of a Local Board, a District Board or making changes in the present constitution of this or that part of the country but to give concrete expression to the surging aspirations of a people yearning for freedom by framing a constitution for a free and independent India for the good of the people, one and all, of this great and historic land, irrespective of caste, class, community or creed, with a hoary civilisation going back to several centuries. More than any argument, as the resolution before the House has received the blessings and support of Mahatma Gandhi, the architect of India's political destiny, from the distant village in Easter Bengal, I trust that it will be carried with acclamation by the whole House, without dissent and my respected friend, the Rt. Hon'ble Dr Jayakar, will see his way to withdraw his amendment unless he has very strong conscientious objection to the course suggested. (*Applause*).

Mr Jaipal Singh (Bihar: General): Mr Chairman, Sir I rise to speak on behalf of millions of unknown hordes—yet very important—of unrecognised warriors of freedom, the original people of India who have variously been known as backward tribes, primitive tribes, criminal tribes and everything else, Sir, I am proud to be a jungli, that is the name by which we are known in my part of the country. Living as we do in the jungles, we know what it means to support this Resolution. On behalf of more than 30 millions of the Adibasis (*cheers*), I, support it not merely because it may have been sponsored by a leader of the Indian National Congress. I support it because it is a resolution which gives expression to sentiments that throb in every heart in this country. I have no quarrel with the wording of this Resolution at all. As a *jungli*, as an Adibasi, I am not expected to understand the legal intricacies of the Resolution. But my common sense tells me, the common sense of my people tells me that every one of us should march in that road of freedom and fight together. Sir, if there is any group of Indian people that has been shabbily treated, it is my people. They have been disgracefully treated, neglected, for the last 6,000 years. The history of the Indian Valley Civilisation, a child of which I am, shows quite clearly that it is the new comers—most of you here are intruders as far as I am concerned—it is the new comers who have driven away my people from the Indus Valley to the jungle fastnesses. This Resolution is not going to teach Adibasis democracy. You cannot teach democracy to the tribal people; you have to learn democratic ways from them. They are the most democratic people on earth. What my people required, Sir, is not adequate safeguards as Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru has put it. They require protection from Ministers, that is the position

today. We do not ask for any special protection. We want to be treated like every other Indian. There is the problem of Hindusthan. There is problem of Pakistan. There is the problem of Adibasis. If we all shout in different militant directions, feel in different ways, we shall end up in *Kabarasthan*. The whole history of my people is one of continuous exploitation and dispossession by the non-aboriginals of India punctuated by rebellions and disorder, and yet I take Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru at his word. I take you all at your word that now we are going to start a new chapter, a new chapter of Independent India where there is equality of opportunity, where no one would be neglected. There is no question of caste in my society. We are all equal. Have we not been casually treated by the Cabinet Mission, more than 30 million people completely ignored? It is only a matter of political window-dressing that today we find six tribal members in this Constituent Assembly. How is it? What has the Indian National Congress done for our fair representation? Is there going to be any provision, in the rules whereby it may be possible to bring in more Adibasis and by Adibasis I mean, Sir, not only men but women also? There are too many men in the Constituent Assembly. We want more women, more women of the type of Mrs Vijayalakshmi Pandit who has already won a victory in America by destroying this racialism, recialism of the Hindus and everybody else. Sir, there is Advisory committee. My people, the Adibasis—they are also Indians—are deeply concerned about what is going to happen about the selection to the Advisory Committee. When I was first given a copy of the Memorandum, as first submitted by the Cabinet Mission, in Section 20 the language, read as follows:

“The Advisory Committee on the rights of citizens, minorities and tribal and excluded areas should contain full representation (mark you ‘should contain full representation’) of the interests affected ..”

Now, when I read a reprint of that in Command Paper 6821, the same paragraph 20 seems to read differently. Here it reads:

“The Advisory Con mittee on the rights of citizens, minorities and tribal and excluded areas will contain due representation.”

Sardar Harnam Singh (Punjab: Sikh): Just a misprint. The original text contained the words “should contain full representation of the interests affected”..

The Hon'ble Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru: Is it so?

Sardar Harnam Singh: I am definite.

Mr Jaipal Singh: I want to be quite clear on that point. I think there has been juggling of words going on to deceive us. I have heard of resolutions and speeches galore assuring Adibasis of a fair deal. If history had to teach me anything at all, I should distrust this Resolution, but I do not. Now we are on a new road. Now we have simply got to learn to trust each other. And I ask friends who are not present with us today, that they should come in, they should trust us and we, in turn, must learn to trust them. We must create a new atmosphere of confidence among ourselves. I regret there must create a new atmosphere of confidence among ourselves. I regret there has been too much talk in this House in terms of parties and minorities. Sir, I do not consider my people a minority. We have already heard on the floor of the House this morning that the Depressed Classes also consider themselves as Adibasis, the original inhabitants of this country. If you go on adding people like the exterior castes and others who are socially in no man's land, we are not a minority. In any case we have prescriptive rights that no one

dare deny. I need say no more. I am convinced that not only the Mover of this Resolution, Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru, but every one here will deal with us justly.

It is only by dealing justly, and not by a proclamation of empty words, that we will be able to shape a constitution which will mean real freedom. I have heard pronouncements made by Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru in different parts of the country. More particularly was I impressed by what he said during his visit to Assam during the elections. When he was in Ramgarh, I invited him to come and address the sixty thousand Adibasis who were assembled at Ranchi, only 30 miles away. Unfortunately, work kept him busy and he was unable to come. Very fine things have been said. Now, Sir, I would like, for example, to quote, if I may, what Maulana Abul Kalam Azad said at Ramgarh:

"The Congress does not want to dictate its own terms. It admits the fullest right of the minorities to formulate their own safeguards. So far as the settlement of their problem is concerned, it would not depend on the word of the majority."

Sir, the solutions to the various problems of the Adibasis are obvious to my mind and these solutions will have to be thrashed out at some later date. Here I can only adumbrate what is my faith in what seems to be the just solution and it is by a re-alignment by a daring redistribution of provinces. The case of my own area has been very well put, Sir, by yourself when you were the Chairman of the Reception Committee of the Ramgarh session of the Congress. May I just read out the words of cheer that you gave then?

"That portion of Bihar where this great assemblage is meeting today has its own peculiarities. In beauty it is matchless. Its history too is wonderful. These parts are inhabited very largely by those who are regarded as the original inhabitants of India. Their civilisation differs in many respects from the civilisation of other people. The discovery of old articles shows that this civilisation is very old. The Adibasis belong to a different stock from the Aryas and people of the same stock are spread towards the south-east of India in the many islands to a great distance. Their ancient culture is preserved in these parts to a considerable extent, perhaps more than elsewhere."

Sir, I say you cannot teach my people democracy. May I repeat that it is the advent of Indo-Aryan hordes that has been destroying the vestiges of democracy. Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru in his latest book puts the case very nicely and I think I may quote it. In his 'Discovery of India' he says, talking of the Indus Valley Civilisation, and later centuries—

"There were many tribal republics, some of them covering large areas."

Sir, there will again be many tribal republics, republics which will be in the vanguard of the battle for Indian freedom. I heartily support Resolution and hope that the members who are now outside will have the same faith in their fellow countrymen. Let us fight for freedom together, sitting together and working together. Then alone, we shall have real freedom. (*Applause*).

Mr Debi Prosad Khaitan (Bengal: General): Mr Chairman, Sir, representing the mercantile community, I want to look at this proposal from the businessman's point of view. From that standpoint, I heartily support the proposal that has been put forward by Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru, and oppose the proposal that has been put forward by the Right Hon'ble Dr Jayakar. Dr Jayakar, after reminding us that he has been a Judge of the Federal Court and is a sitting Member of the Privy Council, has given us some *obiter dicta* which are perhaps not supported either by the Statement or the circumstances of the case. In my humbler opinion, what the Cabinet Mission did was to recognise the aspirations of the people to attain independence, put some fetters on the deliberations of the Constituent Assembly and leave the rest to the talent

and genius of the representatives of this country. There are many lacunae in the Cabinet Mission's Statement which we are entitled to fill and shape our constitution in such a manner as we think will give to the people their aspiration and give us a good constitution. Dr Jayakar seems to think that at this stage we can do nothing but elect the Chairman, and lay down the general order of business. But I am afraid, Sir, that he interprets the words "general order of business" in a very narrow manner. Unless we are prepared to lay down the general objective which we have got to achieve, unless we are prepared to appoint certain Committees which are necessary for the purpose of shaping the constitution of this country, unless we are prepared to appoint a committee and define the central subjects, I do not see how it is possible for us to go ahead with the shaping of the constitution of India. According to Dr Jayakar's argument, at this preliminary session, we would not even be able to appoint a Committee to deal with the central subjects; I fail to understand how we can go ahead without doing so. If we do not define the central subjects at this period of time, it will not be possible for the Provinces or the Groups to frame their own constitution. They may assume to themselves powers which may ultimately have to be taken over by the Central Government. It is therefore absolutely necessary that apart from laying down the objective, we should find out what is meant by the central subjects and what finances are necessary to administer them. Similarly we shall have to lay down other principles, appoint an Advisory Committee to deal with the rights of minorities, how to safeguard their interests and do any other things that are desirable and endeavour, in my opinion, to lay down for the purpose of framing the constitution. He fears that if we put forward the objective now, Mr Jinnah and his party may not come into the Constituent Assembly. I very humbly differ from his opinion. We have so often approached Mr Jinnah. Have we ever succeeded in melting his heart for the purpose of joining us sincerely and honestly for the purpose of attaining independence? Even when the Interim Government was formed he would not accept the invitation of Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru to join the Interim Government but stated to the contrary that he was accepting the invitation of the Viceroy. When the Congress time and again approached him to reach a settlement, he asked Mr Churchill—his friend—to get himself invited to London for the purpose of clearing up certain misunderstandings—I call them misunderstanding—between the Congress and himself. Even now as we are proceeding with the work of the Constituent Assembly for the purpose of shaping the destiny of our country, he is spending his time at Cairo for the purpose of spreading a disease which I may call Hindu phobia, that Hindu Raj will extend to the Mid-East. I am not sorry or surprised that he is engaged in the propaganda at Cairo. If he thinks that the Hindus are strong enough to extend their dominions to the Mid-East, it is all the more reason for him to come back to his own country and join us in framing a constitution for attaining independence with due regard to the interests of all minorities consistently with peace and progress. I hope, Sir, we shall not suffer from a disease that I may call Jinnah-phobia and always out of fear of Mr Jinnah and his Muslim League, make ourselves absolutely helpless and delay the framing of our much needed constitution. We should muster up courage. We should see to it that the Constitution that is framed is reasonable to safeguard all interests so that the economic and political freedom of our country may be achieved as early as possible. If we simply go on delaying, I do not know what further troubles may arise. For the purpose of avoiding trouble in the future, I would submit to this House to take courage and go ahead with the framing of the Constitution in order that we may attain independence as quickly as we possibly can. I hope, Sir, that we shall not lose time but go ahead with our work and therefore support the Resolution as moved by Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru. (*Cheers*).

Mr Damber Singh Gurung (Bengal: General): Mr Chairman, Sir, I understand here today as the only representative of 30 lakhs of Gurkhas permanently domiciled in India. It is 30 lakhs, near about the population of the Sikhs, still I am the solitary representative here in this House. I need not give any introduction as to who these Gurkhas are. They have made themselves sufficiently known to the world by their excellent fighting qualities. It has been proved to the hilt during the last World War No. I and No. II that they are the greatest fighting race in the World.

It is on behalf of these valiant Gurkhas that I, as the President of the All-India Gurkha League, whole-heartedly support the Resolution moved by Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru. It is high time that we should take such a strong step. If we adopt the policy of wait and see as has been advocated by Dr Jayakar and supported by Dr Ambedkar, we will never reach our goal. The Interim Government which is functioning to-day would not have come into existence if we had adopted that policy. Fortunately these two Doctors are not Doctors in Medicine, otherwise they would have killed the patient by delaying the operation. (*Laughter*). We have waited too long and we should not wait any longer. It will be simply showing our weakness.

Sir, it has been very often said that the Gurkhas have been the stumbling block on the path to freedom. It may be true if it is viewed from that angle of vision but it must always be remembered that, especially in the Military Department, duty first and duty last, and the discipline is the most essential thing without which no nation can rule. Now in Free India you will ask us to do the same thing as we were asked to do under the British Government, if there be any disrupter of the constitutionally established Government, and you will praise them for maintaining that discipline.

Sir, the problem of the Gurkhas is quite different. They are scattered throughout India. It is only in the district of Darjeeling and the Province of Assam that they are concentrated to a certain extent. Their number in these two areas is about 14 lakhs and the rest are scattered throughout India. They are very backward educationally and economically. Though we were made to do the dirtiest work in India for which we have been even called butchers by Indians, though hundreds and thousands of Gurkha lives were sacrificed to keep the British rule in India and elsewhere, nothing has been done by the British Government so far for the uplift of the Gurkhas. We have been very sadly neglected. Only at the time of War they remember the Gurkhas. It has always been the policy of the British Government to keep us backward and ignorant so that we may be sacrificed any time, anywhere they liked.

The Gurkhas are apprehending whether the same policy will be followed by the Congress too. There is strong ground for this apprehension. Before the election of Members to the Constituent Assembly, the All-India Gurkha League approached the Congress High Command to give adequate representation to the Gurkhas too in the Constituent Assembly but our claim was totally ignored and not a single seat was given for 30 lakhs of Gurkhas, whereas as many as 3 seats were given to the Anglo-Indians whose population is only 1 lakh 42 thousand in India. I do not think that Gurkhas will, any more, tolerate this kind of injustice. I have, very recently been to Nepal, leading a delegation of the All India Gurkha League to His Highness the Maharaja of Nepal and I hope Nepal will not allow any such exploitation of the Gurkhas. Sir, the demand of the Gurkhas is that they must be recognised as a minority community and that they must have adequate representation in the Advisory Committee that is going to be formed. When the Anglo-Indians with only 1 lakh 42 thousand population have been recognised as a minority community, and Scheduled Castes among the Hindus have been recognised as a separate community, I do not see any reason why Gurkhas with 30 lakhs population should

not be recognised as such. The Gurkhas whose total population including Nepal is 15 million shall have to play a very very important part in Free India. I request the leaders to consider this very seriously.

Lastly, I would like to say a word, Sir. If Mr Jinnah thinks himself to be an Indian, I would request him to come to India and settle the differences here, as this is our domestic quarrel. Why should he seek the help of those who kept us in slavery for centuries? I would think that a kick from a brother is more palatable than a hypocritic pat from an outsider. If the major party does not do any justice to the cause of the minorities, we will combine together and revolt and make India a hot bed and I am afraid, the ancient history of India may be repeated. But I must make one point clear, that no minority will support the fantastic claim for Pakistan of Mr Jinnah. We stand for a United India.

In spite of all this, if Mr Jinnah goes on throwing the challenge of civil war, I ask the countrymen to accept that challenge and let us fight it out. As for the Gurkhas, we will fight along with those who want one India and oppose those who want to divide it.

Dr Sir Hari Singh Gour (CP and Berar: General): Sir, as I listened to the speeches of the Hon'ble Members, my mind has been rankling with three different propositions. The first is the Hon'ble Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru's well-considered and well-phrased Resolution. The Second is my friend Dr Jayakar's blocking motion in the form of an amendment. And the third is the frequent cry against Mr Jinnah's Pakistan. And the fourth—incidentally—is a mention of the Indian States.

May I, Sir, at the outset refer to the Resolution itself? It has been said that this is only a preliminary session of the Constituent Assembly and we are not entitled to go into the question of this Resolution. With due respect to those who take this view, I wish to point out that the Constituent Assembly has been described—and rightly described—as a Sovereign Body. If it is the Sovereign Body of India, it is entitled to pass this Resolution, which sets out the basic principle of the whole constitution of future India. Hon'ble Members seem to think that the Constituent Assembly is the creature of the British Cabinet mission to India and that it is conditioned by the terms of the document known as the Cabinet Mission's Statement of May, the 16th. I wish respectfully to point out that the Constituent Assembly is the voice of the people of India (*Hear, hear*) and is not the creature of the British Cabinet Mission in this country, and as the voice of India, it owes its duty to the people of India and when that voice became strong and inflexible the British Cabinet yielded to the pressure of India to give to India, what India had been demanding for several years—the right to frame its own constitution for this Assembly. Let us not, therefore, dismiss from our minds that while we pay due respect to the wishes of the Cabinet Mission we are not bound by the conditions that they may have laid down, and that our primary duty—and our sole duty—is to discharge our responsibility to our masters—the people of India. If this fact is kept in view, the other question will recede into the background.

One of them is the terms of reference and Mr Jayakar's consequential amendment. I beg to submit that the Constituent Assembly would lose its prestige and dignity if it was going about hankering for the support of our friends of the Muslim League. If we have a duty to the public of India that duty must and shall be performed, regardless of whether Mr Jinnah or Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru or anybody else comes in or goes out. These are personal accidents and incidents, but our Constituent Assembly must carry on its work regardless of people who came in and people who go out of it. (*Hear hear*). Supposing Messrs Jinnah & Co had come in

one the first stage and for reasons of their own—and for very good reasons, I assure you—they walked out of the Assembly, would that be any ground for adjourning this Assembly to run after them and catching them by their coat tails and saying to them “Please don’t run out; come in and if you run out, we also will run out with you”? (*Laughter*). I submit no Constituent Body—much less the Constituent Body of Aryavarth—shall demean itself into this position of humiliation and self-negation.

Mr Jinnah, according to the newspapers, is now at Cairo—influencing the Muslim opinion in favour of Pakistan. I have written to Mr Jinnah before, and I wish once more to remind this House that we might send him a message that he may perhaps prolong his visit to the ten Pakistans which have been and are enforced for a thousand years in Iraq, Libya and the rest—let him see and visualise for himself the dreams of these Pakistans and having done that, he will come back to this country, a sadder but a wiser man, thoroughly humiliated and convinced that Pakistan is not suited to the best interests of our fellow-countrymen, the Muslims of India. If India were to be divided into Pakistan and Hindustan, how many hours will this Pakistan be free and will not be a morsel to the surrounding powers as have been the Pakistans throughout the Muslim world?

Sir, as a student of history, I was reading the history of Turkey and saw how Kemal Pasha Ata-Turk saw the futility and unwisdom of combining politics with religion. The first thing he did was to put an end to Pakistan and establish the Republic of Turkey. And Turkey, of all Muslim countries, is probably the only independent country in the configuration of nations from Iran right up to Palestine. Let our friends the Muslim realise this fact and remember it and they will have no difficulty whatever in renouncing Pakistan as a dangerous and suicidal move on the part of Mr Jinnah.

Then, Sir, up to now the majority community has been denouncing Pakistan on the ground that we are for the unity of India. But we are for the unity of India, not from any sentimental grounds; we are for the unity of India because we have often offered—and I wish on behalf of my friends to offer once more from the floor of this House—a constructive suggestion specially designed to benefit the Mussalmans of India. Let there be joint electorates and let the Muslims keep their quota of seats, but let there be a provision in the electorates that no member of one community shall be deemed to have been duly elected unless he polls a certain percentage of votes of the other community. In this way we shall have introduced democratic and territorial elections instead of communal elections, and the severity of caste and communal differences will begin to disappear in course of time. If this proposal is acceptable to the Muslim League, I have no doubt that the majority community and the Congress will probably consider the proposal favourably, as being both democratic and non-communal, and our re-introducing the principle of territorial elections in this country. My friends on the Muslim side ought to have a constructive policy, not for dividing and disuniting India but for the purpose of creating a homogeneous solidarity between the various castes, communities and classes in India so as to bring about a united free India.

Sir, in America we have really fifty different nationalities of all kinds and all grades, but the moment the American war of independence was fought and won, they never thought of linking their freedom with religion, and this is why America has become now the master race of the world. And India, let me tell you, will equally be not the master but the chief servant of all Asiatic countries, if it remains united and strong for her self-defence.

Another section of the Indian people, the Indian States, are still lingering on the fence. They say, you should postpone the Constituent Assembly till we come in. I beg to submit, as

a student of law, that the position of Indian States is extremely simple and it is this. They say they have their treaties with the Crown. I will assume that they or every one, one and all of them have their treaty with the Crown and that these treaties go far back to hundred or a hundred and fifty years. But what was the Crown of England 150 years ago? It was the voice of the ruling Government, of the British Cabinet, and, consequently, when they speak of their having had treaties with the Crown, what they do mean is that they have had their treaties with the Government of England for the time being in power. It is an ordinary platitude if I say — if the Crown of England accepted the advice of the British Cabinet 100 or 150 years ago, is it wrong for the Crown of England to-day to act on the advice of the Indian Cabinet? Can the Indian Princes complain that the Crown has got no right to choose its own advisers now? Therefore, their position is a futile one when they speak of their treaties with the Crown. Then, they say that the Crown has got the right of paramountcy. But they forget that the British Government in India has got the right of protecting all the Indian States, from the big, State of His Exalted Highness the Nizam of Hyderabad to the smallest State in Mathiawar. And he who has the right of protection enjoys *de facto* the right of paramountcy. The defence of British India, having been transferred to the Interim Government, the Interim Government because responsible for the security of the Indian Princes, and consequently *pro tanto* that right of paramountcy has passed from the King of England or the Parliament of England to the Interim Government.

The third point that I wish to draw the attention of the Indian Princes to is, even assuming that there was a figurative continuance of paramountcy in the King, it was pointed out in the course of debates in the House of Lords that when the transfer of power to India take place, that paramountcy will lapse, and, consequently, the Indian States must either join hands with the Interim Government in India or remain isolated and aloof as a subordinate creature of that free India. I therefore advise my friends of the Indian States that they are waiting in vain for an invitation from the Constituent Assembly to come in. If they wish to come in, they are welcome to do so. As regard treaties with the Indian Princes in the states, that again is a matter on which the Constituent Assembly will have a final say. I therefore think that the question of Pakistan and that of Indian States need not worry us. Let us go ahead with our duty, but remember it that this Constituent Assembly has been misunderstood even by the Higher Command of the Congress, as if we were a creature of the British Government or of the British Mission. It is not the creature of the British Government or of the British Crown. (*Hear, hear*). It has come into existence by reason of the fact that the political consciousness of the country has grown to an extent that the British Government will either face the constitutional freedom of India or the coercive freedom. Either force of persuasion is left to the British Government. The late Viceroy, Lord Linlithgow in the House of Lords, only the other day, pointed out that the British Government cannot hold on to India unless it has behind it the moral claim of the British support. It has no support in Great Britain and it certainly has ceased to have support in India. Consequently, it has become a question of political necessity; and the British Mission and the British Labour Party are now pledged to grant freedom to this country. Freedom will come. It shall come. But when we are sitting here to frame the future Constitution of India, let us not look askance and cast our eyes as to what the Muslim League would think or what the British Government will think and refer our doubts to the Federal Court.

I do not wish to anticipate the decision of this House on the subject of reference to the Federal Court, but I do wish to repeat once more that this House should be sufficiently self-

respecting to carry out its duties regardless of the opposition it may meet and the criticisms it might arouse from whatever source they might come. (*Loud applause*).

Shrimati Dakshayani Velayudan (Madras: General): Mr Chairman, before I express my views on the Resolution, let me pay my humble homage to our Revolutionary Father, Mahatma Gandhi (*applause*). It is his mystic vision, his political idealism and his social passion that gave us the instruments to achieve our goal. I submit that a Constituent Assembly not only frames a constitution, but also gives the people a new frame-work of life. To frame a constitution is an easy job, because there are many models for us to imitate. But to renew a people on a new foundation requires the synthetic vision of a planner. The Independent Sovereign Republic of India plans a free society. In our ancient polity, there were conflicts between absolutism and republicanism. The slender flame of republicanism was snuffed out by the power political States. The Lichavi Republic was the finest expression of the democratic genius of our ancients. There, every citizen was called a Raja. In the Indian Republic of tomorrow, the power will come from the people ...

We could understand the attitude of the Princes in this matter from the statement made by the members of the Negotiating Committee who represent the Chamber of Princes. But here comes a Maharaja with a historic message to his people, I mean the Maharaja of the Cochin State, which is one of the most advanced States in India and I am proud to say that I belong to it. Here is a part of the message:

"I believe in pure constitutional rule and, throughout my life, I have sedulously cultivated an attitude towards life and institutions which are antipathetic to autocracy and personal rule."

From this message it is obvious that the power comes from the people. In the Indian Republic there will be no barriers based on caste or community. The Harijans will be safe in a Republican State of the Indian Union. I visualise that the underdogs will be rulers of the Indian Republic. It therefore appear to the Harijan Delegates of this Constituent Assembly that they should not harm on separatism. We should not make ourselves the laughing stock of our future generations by harping on separatism. Communalism, whether Harijan, Christian, Muslim or Sikh, is opposed to nationalism. (*Hear, hear.*) What we want is not all kinds of safeguards. It is the moral safeguard that gives real protection to the underdogs of this country. I am not at all afraid of the future of the Harijan. It is not safeguards that go to improve the status of the Harijans.

The other day we heard Mr Churchill waxing eloquent over the question of the Harijans. He said that the British Government is responsible for the life and welfare of the so-called Scheduled Castes of India. I would like to ask him one question. What has the British Government done to improve the social status of the Harijans? Did they ever pass any legislation to remove the social disabilities of the Harijans except producing some chaprasis and butlers? And Mr Churchill also complained that the Harijans were thrown at the mercy of the Caste Hindus, their oppressors. Mr Churchill cannot take the 70 million Harijans of this of this land to Great Britain to give them protection. He may give protection to a few communalists who might fly to England. Mr Churchill should understand that we are Indians. The Harijans are Indians and they have to live in India as Indians and they will live in India as Indians. We also heard recently that the Scheduled Castes are considered as a minority. Nothing of the sort is mentioned in the State Paper of May 16. I refuse to believe that the 70 million Harijans are to be considered as a minority. Neither Lord Pethick-Lawrence the Secretary of State for India, nor even the Prime Minister, Mr Attlee, nor even the Leaders of the Opposition, Mr Churchill,

is going to improve the condition of the Harijans. What we want is the removal, immediate removal, of our social disabilities. Only an Independent Socialist Indian Republic can give freedom and equality of status to the Harijans. Our freedom can be obtained only from Indians and not from the British Government.

Let me make a personal appeal to Dr Ambedkar to join the nationalist forces of this country. He is the only leader of the Harijan community and his non-co-operation with the nationalist forces is a great tragedy to the Harijans; his co-operation with the nationalist forces will enhance the emancipation of the Harijans. Here is a unique occasion for you, Sir, (addressing Dr Ambedkar) to place your services before the country.

The Harijans will be free only in a Socialist Republican India, and let us all support the Resolution and work for its implementation even if it demands the utmost sacrifices from us.

Regarding the amendment brought forward by the Right Hon'ble Dr Jayakar, I think those who support the amendment get their inspiration from Whitehall and not from the people of this land. Recently we heard much about the postponement of the Constituent Assembly from different quarters. Lord Wavell pleaded for it. Mr Jinnah insisted on it. I feel that Dr Jayakar by moving this amendment, is questioning the very validity of the Constituent Assembly and is strengthening the argument put forward by Mr Churchill the other day in the House of Commons.

Dr Jayakar also expressed a pious sympathy for the people of the States. If by the term 'States' the Hon'ble Member means the real representatives of the States, I can assure the Hon'ble Member that the people of the States are behind the Congress and the Constituent Assembly (*applause*) and any decision made by the Constituent Assembly will be acceptable to the people of the States.

I think I should make some reference to the views expressed by the Communist leader. In the historic Resolution moved by Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru, I think every provision is made for the development of every individual in this land. And now the Party which called the war as the People's War, has come here to advice the Constituent Assembly to postpone the consideration of this Resolution for some time. If I am wrong there, I may be excused. The so-called Communists, instead of emancipating the Harijans, are only exploiting them. They promise pieces of land to the Harijans and in that way they try to take them away from the nationalist forces. I think the Communist Party is getting its inspiration from some outside quarter and so it is not for us to accept the views of the Communists. We cannot depend on such a Party for our emancipation and our emancipation lies in the national forces which are represented in this Assembly. I therefore hope that in the future independent India, the Harijans will have an honourable place as every other citizen of this land.

Mr Chairman: It is already quarter past one. The house will now adjourn till day after tomorrow, 11 o'clock.

The Assembly then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock, on Saturday, the 21st December 1946.

[The Aims and Objects Resolution debate was resumed on 20 January 1947, and the Resolution was passed unanimously on 21 January 1947. This part of the debate could not be included, as it falls outside the chronological limits of the present volume. Ed.]



2.iii CONGRESS

1. Congress Election Manifesto 1946

Indian Annual Register (1946); Vol. I, pp. 225–8.

The Congress Election Manifesto 1946

For sixty years the National Congress has laboured for the freedom of India. During this long span of years its history has been the history [of the] Indian people, straining at the leash that has held them in bondage, everything to unloose themselves from it. From small beginnings it has progressively grown and spread in this vast country, carrying the message of freedom to the masses of our people in the towns as well as the remotest villages. From these masses it has gained power and strength and developed into a mighty organisation, the living and vibrant symbol of India's will to freedom and independence. From generation to generation it has dedicated itself of this sacred cause, and in its name and under its banner innumerable countrymen and countrywomen of ours have laid down their lives and undergone suffering in order to redeem the pledge they had taken, by service and sacrifice it has enshrined itself in the hearts of our people; by its refusal to submit to any dishonour to our nation it has built up a powerful movement of resistance to foreign rule.

The career of the Congress has been one of both constructive efforts for the good of the people and of unceasing struggle to gain freedom. In this struggle it has faced numerous crises and come repeatedly into direct conflict with the armed might of a great empire. Following peaceful methods, it has not only survived these conflicts but has gained new strength from them. After the recent three years of an unprecedented mass upheaval and its cruel and ruthless suppression, the Congress has risen stronger than ever and become more loved by the people by whom it has stood through storm and stress.

The Congress has stood for equal rights and opportunities for every citizen of India, man or woman. It has stood for the unity of all communities and religious groups and for tolerance and goodwill between them. It has stood for full opportunities for the people as a whole to grow and develop according to their own wishes and genius; it has also stood for the freedom of each group and territorial area within the nation to develop its own life and culture within the larger framework, and it has stated that for this purpose such territorial areas or provinces should be constituted, as far as possible, on a linguistic and cultural basis. It has stood for the rights of all those who suffer from social tyranny and injustice and for the removal for them of all barriers to equality.

The Congress has envisaged a free, democratic State with the fundamental rights and liberties of all its citizens guaranteed in the constitution. This constitution, in its view, should be a federal one with autonomy for its constituent units, and its legislative organs elected under universal adult franchise. The federation of India must be a willing union of its various parts. In order to give the maximum of freedom to the constituent units there may be a minimum list of common and essential federal subjects which will apply to all units, and a further optional list of common subjects which may be accepted by such units as desire to do so.

The constitution shall provide for fundamental rights, among them the following: 1. Every citizen of India has the right of free expression of opinion, the right of free association and combination, and the right to assemble peacefully and without arms, for a purpose not opposed to law or morality. 2. Every citizen shall enjoy freedom of conscience and the right freely to

profess and practise his religion, subject to public order and morality. 3. The culture, language and script of the minorities and of the different linguistic areas shall be protected. 4. All citizens are equal before the law, irrespective of religion, caste, creed or sex. 5. No disability attaches to any citizen by reason of his or her religion, caste, creed or sex, in regard to public employment, office of power or honour, and in the exercise of any trade or calling. 6. All citizens have equal rights in regard to wells, tanks, roads, schools and places of public resort, maintained out of State or local funds, or dedicated by private persons for the use of the general public. 7. Every citizen has the right to keep and bear arms, in accordance with regulations and reservations made in that behalf. 8. No person shall be deprived of his liberty, nor shall his dwelling or property be entered, sequestered, or confiscated, save in accordance with law. 9. The State shall observe neutrality in regard to all religions. 10. The franchise shall be on the basis of universal adult suffrage. 11. The State shall provide for free and compulsory basic education. 12. Every citizen is free to move throughout India and to stay and settle in any part thereof, to follow any trade or calling, and to be treated equally with regard to legal prosecution or protection in all parts of India.

The State shall further provide all necessary safeguards for the protection and the development of the backward or suppressed element in the population, so that they might make rapid progress and take a full and equal part in national life. In particular, the State will help in the development of the people of the tribal areas in a manner most suited to their genius, and in the educational and social and economic progress of the scheduled classes.

A hundred and fifty years and more of foreign rule have arrested the growth of the country and produced numerous vital problems that demand immediate solution. Intensive exploitation of the country and the people during this period has reduced the masses to the depths of misery and starvation. The country has not only been politically kept under subjection and humiliated, but has also suffered economic, social, cultural and spiritual degradation. During the years of war this process of exploitation by irresponsible authority in utter disregard of Indian interests and vicissitudes, and an incompetence in administration arched a new height leading to terrible famine and widespread misery. There is no way to solving any of these urgent problems except through freedom and independence. The content of political freedom must be both economic and social.

The most vital and urgent of India's problems is how to remove the curse of poverty and raise the standard of the masses. It is to the well-being and progress of these masses that the Congress has directed its special attention and its constructive activities. It is by their well-being and advancement that it has judged every proposal and every change, and it has declared that anything that comes in the way of the good of the masses of our country must be removed. Industry and agriculture, the social services and public utilities must be encouraged, modernised and rapidly extended in order to add to the wealth of the country and give it the capacity for self-growth, without dependence on others. But all this must be done with the primary object of benefitting the masses of our people and raising their economic, cultural and spiritual level, removing unemployment, and adding to the dignity of the individual. For this purpose it will be necessary to plan and coordinate social advance in all its many fields, to prevent the concentration of wealth and power in the hands of individuals and groups, to prevent vested interests inimical to society from growing, and to have social control of the mineral resources, means of transport and the principal methods of production and distribution in land, industry and in other departments of national activity, so that free India may develop into a cooperative commonwealth. The State must, therefore, own or control key and basic industries and services,

mineral resources, railways, shipping and other means of public transport. Currency and exchange, banking and insurance, must be regulated in the national interest.

Though poverty is widespread in India, it is essentially a rural problem, caused chiefly by overpressure on land and lack of other wealth producing occupations. India, under British rule, has been progressively ruralised, many of her avenues of work and employment closed, and a vast mass of the population thrown on the land, which has undergone continuous fragmentation, till a very large number of holdings have become uneconomic. It is essential, therefore, that the problem of the land should be dealt with in all its aspects. Agriculture has to be improved on scientific lines and industry has to be developed rapidly in its various forms—large-scale, medium and small—so as not only to produce wealth but also to absorb people from the land. In particular, cottage industries have to be encouraged, both as whole-time and part-time occupations. It is essential that in planning and the development of industry, while maximum wealth production for the community should be aimed at, it should be borne in mind that this is not done at the cost of creating fresh unemployment. Planning must lead to maximum employment, indeed to the employment of every able-bodied person. Landless labourers should have opportunities of work offered to them and be absorbed in agriculture or industry.

The reform of the land system, which is so urgently needed in India, involves the removal of intermediaries between the peasant and the State. The rights of intermediaries should therefore, be acquired on payment of equitable compensation. When individualist farming of peasant proprietorship should continue, progressive agriculture as well as the creation of new social values and incentives require some system of cooperative farming suited to Indian conditions. Any such change can, however, be made only with the goodwill and agreement of the peasantry concerned. It is desirable, therefore, that experimental cooperative farms should be organised with State help in various parts of India. There should also be large State farms for demonstrative and experimental purposes.

In the development of land and industry there has to be a proper integration and balance between rural and urban economy. In the past, rural economy has suffered, and the town and city have prospered at the cost of the village. This has to be righted and an attempt made to equalise, as far as possible, the standards of life of town dwellers and villagers. Industry should not be concentrated in particular provinces, so as to give a balanced economy, to each province, and it should be decentralised, as far as this is possible, without sacrifice of efficiency.

Both the development of land, industry, as well as the health and well-being of the people, requires the harnessing and proper utilisation of the vast energy that is represented by the great rivers of India, which is not only running to waste but is often the cause of great injury to the land and the people who lived on it. River commissions should be continued to undertake this task in order to promote irrigation and ensure an even and continuous supply of water, to prevent disastrous floods and soil erosion, to eradicate malaria, to develop hydroelectric power, and in other ways to help in raising the general standard of life, especially in the rural areas. The power resources of the country have to be developed rapidly in this and other ways in order to provide necessary foundation for the growth of industry and agriculture. Adequate arrangement should be made for the education of the masses with a view to raising them intellectually, economically, culturally and normally, and to fit them for the new forms of work and services which will open out before them. Public health services which are essential for the growth of the nation should be provided for on the widest scale, and in this, as in other matters, the needs of the rural areas should receive especial attention. This should include

special provisions for maternity and child welfare. Conditions should thus be created in which every individual has an equal opportunity for advance in every field of national activity and there is social security for all.

Science in this [these] innumerable fields of activity has played an ever increasing part in influencing and moulding human life and will do so in even greater measure in the future. Industrial, agricultural and cultural advanced, as well as national defence depend upon it. Science research is, therefore, a basic and essential activity of the State, and should be organised and encouraged on the widest scale.

In regard to labour, the State shall safeguard the interests of industrial workers and shall secure for them a minimum wage and a decent standard of living, proper housing, hours of work and conditions of labour in conformity, as far as economic conditions in the country permit, with international standards, suitable machinery for the settlement of disputes between employers and workmen, and protection against the economic consequences of old age, sickness and unemployment. Workers shall have the right to form unions to protect their interests.

Rural indebtedness has in the past crushed the agricultural population, and through owing to various causes in recent years this has grown less, the burden still continues and must be removed. Cheap credit must be made available through cooperatives. Cooperatives should also be organised for other purposes both in rural and urban areas. In particular, industrial cooperatives should be encouraged as being especially suited for the development of small-scale industry on democratic basis.

While the immediate and urgent problems of India can only be effectively tackled by a joint and planned attack on all fronts—political, economic, agricultural, industrial and social—certain needs are of paramount importance, today. Owing to the gross incompetence and mismanagement of the Government an incredible amount of suffering has been caused to the people of India. Millions have died of starvation, and scarcity of food and clothing is still well-spread. Corruption in the services and in all matters pertaining to the supply and control of the vital necessities of life is rampant and has become intolerable. These urgent problems require immediate attention.

In international affairs, the Congress stands for the establishment of a world federation of the nations. Till such time as such federation takes shape, India must develop friendly relations with all nations, and particularly with her neighbours. In the Far East, in Southeast Asia and in Western Asia, India has had trade and cultural relations for thousands of years, and it is inevitable that with freedom she should renew and develop these relations. Reasons for security and future trend of trades also demand closer contacts with these regions. India which has concluded her own struggle for freedom on a non-violent, basis, will always throw her weight on the side of world peace and cooperation. She will also champion the freedom of all other subject nations and peoples, for only on the basis of this freedom and the elimination of imperialism everywhere can world peace be established.

On the 8th of August, 1942, the All India Congress Committee passed a resolution, since then famous in India's history. By its demands and challenge the Congress stands today. It is on the basis of this resolution and with its battle cry that Congress faces the elections.

The Congress therefore appeals to the voters all over the country to support Congress candidates in every way at the forthcoming elections, and stand by the Congress at the critical juncture, which is so pregnant with future possibilities. In these elections, petty issues do not count, nor do individuals, nor sectarian cries—only one thing counts: the freedom and independence of our motherland, from which all other freedoms will flow to our people.

Many a time the people of India have taken the pledge of independence; that pledge has yet to be redeemed; and the well beloved cause for which it stands and which has summoned us so often, still beckons to us. The time is coming when we shall redeem it in full. This election is a small test for us, a preparation for the greater thing to come. Let all those who care and long for freedom and the independence of India meet this test with strength and confidence and march together to the free India of our dreams.

(The Independence Pledge has undergone slight changes since it was first taken by Congressmen in 1930, 26th January. We [the editors of *Indian Annual Register*] reproduce below the pledge taken by Congressmen on Independence Day, 1946.)

Independence Pledge for 26th January, 1946

We believe that it is an inalienable right of the Indian people, as, of any other people, to have freedom and enjoy the fruits of their toil and have the necessities of life, so that they may have full opportunities of growth. We believe also that if the Government deprives a people of these rights and oppresses them, the people have a further right to alter it or to abolish it. The British Government in India has not only deprived the Indian people of their freedom but has based itself on the exploitation of the masses, and ruined India economically, politically, culturally and spiritually. We believe, therefore, that India must sever the British connection and attain Purna Swaraj or Complete Independence.

We recognise that the most effective way of gaining our freedom is not through violence. India has gained strength and self-reliance and marched a long way to Swaraj following peaceful and legitimate methods, and it is by adhering to these methods that our country will attain independence.

We pledge ourselves anew to the Independence of India and solemnly resolve to carry out non-violently the struggle for freedom till Purna Swaraj is attained.

We believe that non-violent action in general and preparation for non-violent direct action in particular, require successful working of the constructive programme kept before the country by Gandhiji and accepted by the Congress and in particular of Khadi, communal harmony and removal of untouchability; We shall seek every opportunity of spreading goodwill among fellowmen without distinction of caste or creed. We shall endeavour to raise from ignorance and poverty those who have been neglected and to advance in every way the interests of those who are considered to be backward and suppressed. We know that though we are out to destroy the imperialistic system, we have no quarrel with Englishmen, whether officials or non-officials. We know that distinction between the caste Hindu and Harijans must be abolished and Hindus have to forget these distinctions in their daily conduct. Such distinctions are a bar to non-violent conduct. Though our religious faith may be different, in our mutual relations we will act as children of mother India, bound by common nationality and common political and economic interest.

Charkha and Khadi are an integral part of our constructive programme, for the resuscitation of the seven hundred thousand villages of India and for the removal of the grinding poverty of the masses. We shall, therefore, use for our personal requirements nothing but Khadi, and so far as possible, products of village handicrafts only and endeavour to make others do likewise. We shall also try to work to the best of our ability some item or items of the constructive programme.

We pay our grateful homage to thousands of our comrades who faced grave hardships, suffered humiliations and sacrificed their life and property in the last struggle. Their sacrifice will always remind us of the duty never to rest until we have attained our goal.

We reaffirm the resolution passed by the All India Congress Committee on 8th August, 1942. It demands the immediate withdrawal of the British power from India in the interest as much of India as of World Peace and Freedom for all.

This day we pledge ourselves again to a disciplined observance of Congress principles and policies and to keep in readiness to respond to the call of the Congress for carrying on the struggle for the Independence of India.

2. Vallabhbhai Patel's Anti-League, Anti-Pakistan Speech at Ahmedabad

Extracts from a news report, 'Pakistan Means Civil War.' *Hindustan Times*, 16 January 1946.

Ahmedabad, January 15. Addressing a crowded public meeting here last evening, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel said: "The Muslim League has captured all the Muslim seats and it may celebrate Victory Day and believe that Pakistan has been achieved." "But Pakistan cannot be achieved in this manner," he continued. "Pakistan is not in the hands of the British Government. If Pakistan is to be achieved, Hindus and Muslims will have to fight. There will be civil war."

"The Congress is no longer going to knock at the door of the League. The Congress has tried to settle with the League many times. But it has been kicked out every time. The Congress has decided not to approach the League till it changes its policy. It can take by force whatever it wants."

Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel said the Congress has decided to contest the election only to prove how far people were behind the Congress. If the Congress remained aloof from the election, unworthy persons would enter the Councils and they would be used against the Congress. The elections to the Central Assembly were over. But that was not going to decide the problem of India. The Congress had captured a larger number of seats than in the previous Assembly.

Sardar Patel disputed the claim that Britain would hand over power if Hindus and Muslims united. "The Viceroy," he said, "went to England with a formula agreed upon by two representatives of the Congress and the League. On his return from England, he put forth a new proposal. Still the Congress accepted it. The Viceroy admitted the sincerity of the Congress and the unreasonableness of Mr Jinnah. Yet he refused to do anything against the wishes of Mr Jinnah. If this policy is to be pursued again we shall not accept it.

"We are determined to take power into our hands," he continued. "We cannot now believe in Britain's words. Britain should show us by action that she is prepared to part with power. We are not going to repeat the Simla mistake ..."

"The Congress," emphasised Sardar Patel "is seeking election not on minor issues but to put into execution the 'Quit India' resolution of 1942." ...

"Many races have come and settled here. Some are claiming to be a separate nation and are demanding partition of India.... The Congress will fight for freedom single-handed."—API.

3. Congress Electioneering in the United Provinces

Extracts from Weekly Report No. 3, 18 January 1946; CID Records, Government of the United Provinces (1946); Uttar Pradesh State Archives.

... Congressmen continued their electioneering propaganda chiefly amongst Muslims, the depressed classes, and the labourers. Pant will resume his election tour on return from Delhi. The UP Congress Parliamentary Board met at Lucknow from January 10 to 14 and among its candidates for the Provincial Assembly [it] selected several young Socialists. Boastful accounts of the Congress mass movements, the inefficiency of Government, and alleged police atrocities figured largely in election speeches. On January 16 at a meeting [of] 2000 at the Benaras Hindu University, P.D. Tandon said "for the purpose of achieving freedom the principle of non-violence proved ineffective. Freedom will not be achieved without sacrifice and shedding blood." ...

Following the recent speeches of Mr Gandhi Congressmen are paying renewed attention to the constructive programme, and the UPPCC has appointed a subcommittee of 6 to supervise the work in districts....

... 35 released women of the Rani of Jhansi Regiment were recently entertained at the Lucknow Railway Station by Congressmen....

4. Gandhian Constitution Plan

Extracts from a news report, 'Gandhian Constitution for a Free India'. *Free Press Journal*, 24 January 1946.

Wardhaganj, January 23. The Gandhian conception of the Constitution of the future state of Free India is outlined by Principal S. N. Agarwal, author of 'The Gandhian Plan' of India's economic development, in a brochure entitled 'Gandhian Constitution for Free India', of which a summary is [was] released to the press yesterday.

Principal Agarwal has drawn up the Constitution in consultation with Mahatma Gandhi who has written a foreword, to the brochure.

In the course of his Foreword Gandhiji observes: "The framework of this Brochure is based on Principal Agarwal's study of my writings. He has been interpreting them for a number of years. The Brochure contains ample evidence of the care bestowed upon it by the author to make it as accurate as he could. There is nothing in it which has jarred on me as inconsistent, with what I would like to state. Principal Agarwal was good enough to make such alterations, as I thought were necessary."

The Gandhian Constitution consists of two parts. The first part lays down the basic principles and ideals of a good and stable constitution. It is emphasised that if democracy is to survive it must go the Gandhian way, which upholds the ideal of more or less self-sufficient and self-governing rural republics, enjoying the maximum local autonomy. The resuscitation of village communities or Panchayats and building up of the administrative systems from bottom will usher in true democracy and economic equality.

Non-violence and decentralisation are the keynotes of the Gandhian Constitution. Decentralised democracy is strongly advocated on grounds of [a] balanced economy, human and cultural values, sociological well-being, aesthetic sense, national defence and international harmony. It is pointed out that such decentralised but well coordinated democracy, instead of being medieval, will present to the world a model constitution for the new order.

In the second part of the Brochure Principal Agarwal deals with the different aspect of future constitution for 'Swaraj' from the Gandhian standpoint. While enumerating the fundamental rights, special stress is laid on fullest protection of the so-called minorities and the backward classes, spheres of religion, culture, language, script and social customs.

According to the Gandhian Constitution the village should be the basic unit of administration in Free India. Every village shall elect, on the basis of universal adult franchise a Panchayat which will have very wide and comprehensive functions relating to education, protection, recreation, agriculture, industries, trade, commerce, sanitation, medical relief, justice, finance and taxation.

To coordinate the social, economic, political and cultural activities of the villages there shall be Taluka and District Panchayats, whose functions will be mostly advisory. Presidents of the District Panchayats will form the Provincial Panchayat which shall be unicameral.

The present provincial boundaries will have to be run on linguistic basis. There will usually be complete separation of functions between the legislature and the executive. The Provincial Panchayats shall appoint Ministers, who will not be members of the Panchayat. The Ministers will represent the best talent of the Province, irrespective of the Party or communal considerations. Presidents of the Provincial Panchayats shall constitute All India Panchayat which shall be unicameral, a legislature of Free India.

Indian States joining the All India Federation or the Panchayat shall also have the right to send to Panchayat the elected representatives but not the nominated puppets of the Princes.

Consistent with the basic principle of maximum decentralisation of political and economic powers, the Centre shall exercise only the following function: (1) Defence; (2) Economic coordination; (3) Management of Key Industries; (4) Regulation of Currency, Customs and International Trade; (5) Foreign Policy.

The residuary powers shall vest in the federating units.

The All India Panchayat shall appoint Ministers, who shall not be members of the Panchayat. The Ministers shall represent the best talent of the nation without party or communal considerations.

The All India Panchayat shall be a voluntary federation of provinces and the states with largest measure of local self-government. Proceedings of the Provincial Panchayats shall be conducted in the territorial languages. The proceedings of the All India Panchayat shall be in Hindustani.

5. Party Politics and the Forthcoming Elections in Madras Province

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Madras Province for the first half of January 1946. Public (General) Department, Government of Madras (1946); Tamil Nadu State Archives.

Political

As mentioned already in my last report, the dispute between Mr Rajagopalachari and Mr Kamaraj Nadar's group seems to be, more or less, settled, but dissentient voices have, by no means, been silenced. A fair proportion of Mr Kamaraj Nadar's supporters appear to have been against any 'rapprochement'. In North Arcot where Mr Rajagopalachari presided recently over two political conferences, the Collector reports that the attendance was poor due to his unpopularity. At one meeting, a member of the audience demanded an apology from

Mr Rajagopalachari for his failure to take part in 1942 movement. In Trichinopoly there were a number of black flag demonstrations, when Mr Rajagopalachari toured the District, and in Conjeevaram in Chingleput District, there was an even more serious incident, when stones were thrown at his car injuring him slightly. At one meeting in Trichinopoly, it is interesting to note, that Mr Rajagopalachari admitted his desire for power, arguing that he wanted to be of service to his people once again.

Following the settlement, a Tamil Nadu Provincial Election Board has been constituted for selecting candidates on the Congress ticket in the Tamil Nad Area. The majority of the members of the Board belong to the anti-Rajagopalachari group, but it has been agreed that Mr Rajagopalachari should be consulted regarding the selection of candidates. In the Andhra Board, dissension continues between Dr Pattabhi Sitharamiah and Mr Prakasam for the leadership of the Andhra Provincial Congress Committee. Though Dr Sitharamiah relinquished his claim in favour of Mr Prakasam, it is understood that he has sent a separate representation to the High Command and Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel recently summoned Mr Prakasam to Bombay to discuss the question. N.G. Ranga and his party appear to support Mr Prakasam while Dr Sitharamiah has the backing of the more moderate Congressmen. The Board has recently been on a tour in the Andhra District to interview and select candidates for the elections, and opportunity was also taken to hold a number of meetings, at which British Imperialism and Communists were impartially condemned.

The Justice Party again seems to be vacillating on the question of elections and a special session was held on the 6th in Madras City under the Presidency of Sir P.T. Rajan when it was finally decided that the leader of the party should tour the Districts and decide the question of setting up candidates in consultation with local leaders. Mr Ramaswami Naicker meanwhile continues his anti-Brahmin and pro-Dravidistan propaganda on independent lines.

6. Govind Ballabh Pant's Election Speech at Muzaffarnagar, Uttar Pradesh

Extracts from a news report, 'Nawabs alone fear advent of Congress into power'. *Hindustan Times*, 26 January 1946.

Muzaffarnagar, January 2. ... At the outset, the speaker exposed the motives of those who raised the cry of Islam in danger. It was a cry of the nawabs and nawabzadas and their henchmen who feared liquidation of their earnings at the hands of a patriotic Government. It was not Islam but the religion of the nawabs—a religion of luxury, of oppression of the poor, of subservience to the British rule, which props up their iniquitous interests—that would be threatened in the event of the Congress coming into power.

Pandit Pant said the legislations passed during the Congress regime in the UP benefited both the communities. The Debt Acts benefited the Muslims even more than the Hindus, since most of the debtors were Muslims. Similarly, the Congress prohibition programme was more in fulfillment of the tenets of *Shariat* than of the *Dharmshastras*. In view of these facts, it was a deliberate and perverted lie for any one to say that by voting the Congress to power Islam would be endangered.

Pandit Pant wanted to know who were the true representatives of the Muslims—whether those like Maulana Azad and Maulana Madni who knew Arabic, understood the *Shariat* and the Qoran or members of that fashionable titled gentry who dressed themselves like Europeans and lived in European style both in matters of food and drink....

Concluding, Pandit Pant exhorted the audience to vote for the Congress and Nationalist Muslim candidates at the provincial elections....

7. Criticism of Recruitment Still of British Officers to the Indian Civil Service and Indian Police Service

Extracts from a news report, 'Government again censured'. *Statesman*, 1 February 1946.

In the Central Assembly on Thursday, an adjournment motion by Mr Anantasayanam Iyengar (Congress) "to discuss the action of the Government in recruiting European officers to the Indian Civil Service and the Indian Police Service permanently, in view of the declared intention of the Government to hand over the administration very shortly to the people of the country," was passed without a division ...

8. M.K. Gandhi Addresses Madras Workers' Rally

Extracts from a news report, 'The Real Mazdoor Raj'. *Free Press Journal*, 1 February 1946.

Madras, January 31. The hope that a worker would one day be elected President of the Indian National Congress was expressed by Mahatma Gandhi, addressing a huge rally of over 50,000 workers belonging to various labour unions in Madras.

Mahatma Gandhi said that there was nothing extraordinary in a labourer becoming the President of the Congress. It was not necessary that one should know English to be the President. Maulana Azad, the present Congress President, he said, "does not speak in English with anybody, although he know the language ..."

9. Congress-Muslim League Negotiations Breakdown in Sind

Extracts from a news report, 'League Overtures For Sind Coalition Fail'. *Hindustan Times*, 5 February 1946.

Karachi, February 4. Talks for a Congress-League coalition or an all-party Government in Sind which were opened by Mr M. H. Gazdar [MLA; President, Sind Provincial Muslim League] with the Congress President, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, have failed.

The Congress President is understood to have told him that the Congress would welcome an all-party Government and asked them to nominate two Ministers from among their ranks.

But the League insisted on the exclusion of Nationalist Muslims from the Coalition as a condition precedent to their joining the Coalition. Maulana Azad did not agree to the suggestion....

10. Ahrar Campaign in Jalandhar Against Muslim League

News report, 'Ahrars Condemn League Tactics'. *Hindustan Times*, 8 February 1946.

Jullunder, February 5. Local Muslim Leaguers again disturbed a meeting organised here on Saturday by the Majlis-i-Ahrar.

In utter disregard of Mr Jinnah's instructions and contrary to the understanding reached between the two parties, League hooligans repeatedly interrupted Syed Attaullah Shah Bokhari, a prominent Ahrar theologian, when he addressed the meeting. They heckled him by putting odd questions and created uproarious scenes. But he exercised utmost patience. With great difficulty the speaker restored calm.

Clarifying the Majlis-i-Ahrar's programme, Syed Bokhari said that its first and foremost aim was to attain freedom in cooperation with progressive organisations, irrespective of religion or creed. After throwing off the foreign yoke Ahrars would work for among other things total prohibition and abolition of prostitution.

He criticised Pakistan and declared that it would be disastrous to his coreligionists. From the present attitude of its advocates it was abundantly clear that it had been adopted as election tactics which, he maintained, was a slur on the fair name of Islam. He also condemned the Bengal League Ministry for its maladministration which caused the famine. He urged the people to support nationalist organisations in the elections....

11. Demonstration Against Cut in Wheat Rations in United Provinces

Extracts from Weekly Report No. 6, 8 February 1946. CID Records, Government of the United Provinces (1946); Uttar Pradesh State Archives.

... The UPPCC has asked districts to report on the condition of the crops. Congressmen cooperated with other parties in making huge public demonstrations against the cut in the wheat ration....

12. Punjab Ahrar Leaders on Election Tour of the United Provinces

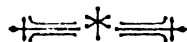
Extracts from Weekly Report No. 6, 8 February 1946. CID Records, Government of the United Provinces; Uttar Pradesh State Archives.

... Hisamuddin and Habibul Rahman, Ahrar leaders of the Punjab, are being called to make an election [tour] of the UP Hifzul Rahman, Secretary of the All India Jamiat-ul-Ulema, while addressing a meeting at Bijnor blamed the British for the existing communal disharmony in India. Maulana Madni made a similar speech at Saharanpur on Feb. 6. Lathi parades have been started by the student volunteers of the Darul Uloom, Deoband....

13. Violence during Bihar Election Campaign

Extracts from a news report, 'Full Story of Assault on Pt. Karyanand Sharma'. *People's Age*, 17 February 1946.

Monghyr, February 6. The first election meeting which was to have been addressed by P.C. Joshi in Lakhisarai (Monghyr) on the fourth was broken up by an organised attack led by the *thana* Congress President, Rajeswari Singh and other Congress workers. About a dozen Communist workers were injured, five of whom are lying in hospital in a precarious condition. Communist candidate, Karyanand Sharma, was injured so seriously that he had to be removed to Patna General Hospital for special attention....



14. The Punjab in the Wake of Unionist Party Collapse in Elections

Article, 'Punjab Elections'. *Hindustan Times*, 25 February 1946.

The collapse of the Unionist Party is the most outstanding feature of the results of the provincial elections in the Punjab. For the moment, this may complicate the politics of that province, but it has a sharp moral for all political parties. The Unionist Party tried to shelve all important issues and fought the elections on the basis of personal and property interests. Though the issue of Pakistan vitally affected the unity and integrity of the Punjab, the Unionist Party leaders allowed the Muslim, Hindu and Sikh members of the party to hold widely different views upon it. It is no wonder that the party has been reduced to a rump of 18 members in a House of 175. The Ahrars and the Khaksars have practically disappeared from the scene, thereby demonstrating that middle positions between wholehearted nationalism and extreme communalism have no appeal for the masses. The Muslim League with its impressive total of 75 and the Panthic Akali Sikhs with their 22 representatives represent the triumph of communalism in a system based on separate communal electorates. That the Congress has been able to get 5 seats including a Muslim and a good contingent of Sikhs is a remarkable achievement in the circumstances, though it has to be confessed that it has yet to get a foothold among the Muslims of the Punjab. Though the Muslim League has come out as the largest party in the Punjab Assembly, its position is anything but enviable. In order to form a Ministry, it has to seek the cooperation of the Akali Sikhs who are declaring from housetops that they will fight to death rather than submit to Pakistan. There is no conceivable combination by which the Muslim League can get a majority on the basis of support to its fundamental demand. The party has either to subordinate its demand for Pakistan for the moment or hand over the Ministry to a combination of the other groups.

If the Muslim League is unable to form a ministry, an alternative stable government can be formed only by a coalition of the Congress, Akalis and the remnant of the Unionist party. It is doubtful whether this is possible. Little love is lost between the Congress Sikhs and the Akalis. It is highly unfortunate that the Akali leaders should indulge in a weak imitation of the tactics of the Muslim League. The Sikhs have everything to lose and nothing to gain by being communalists. On the other hand, they can find immediate strength and ultimate security within nationalism which is above all religious and communal distinctions. It would be an act of wisdom and statesmanship for the Akali Sikhs to merge themselves in the Congress in the political sphere and confine their Panthic activities to the purification and consolidation of their noble Sikh faith and tradition and the proper management of the Gurudwaras. It is the only way by which they can resist the demand for the inclusion of the Sikh homelands in an independent Pakistan. If they have no objection to this inclusion. They can certainly join the Muslim League in the Ministry. It would, however, be suicidal opportunism to seek temporary office with the mental reservation that they could resist Pakistan in spite of their coalition with the Muslim League.

One of the leaders of the Punjab Muslim League has openly pleaded for a Congress-League coalition. The attempts in Sind and Assam have failed and it is difficult to see how it can be otherwise in the Punjab. The Congress cannot possibly accept the role of a Hindu organisation. Even if the Muslim League party in the Punjab is willing to accept for that province that the Congress represents all non-Muslim communities, some basic agreement relating to the issue of Pakistan seems to be fundamental to the success of any Congress-League coalition. The effects of communal electorates are bad everywhere. In a province like the Punjab consisting

of three big communities, of which no one is in a decisive majority, the result of electoral segregation is bound to be political paralysis. There should be no surprise if Bengal elections produce the same result with the Europeans holding the balance between the Hindus and the Muslims. A really democratic system cannot work in either of these provinces unless the separate electorates are replaced by joint electorates or each province is divided into units in which one of the communities will be in an overwhelming majority.

15. The Punjab: A Confused Election

Extracts from an article, 'How Muslim League Won in Punjab'. *Hindustan Times*, 26 February 1946.

In England, we vote as individuals: in India, men vote in crowds. Here in the Punjab, I have been watching the buses and lorries packed with bearded, white-robed peasants, which carry them to the polls. Each displays its party flag and shouts its slogans.

In a wide open space round the rural police station the crowds of voters gather under the rival flags. Canvassers of the two parties marshal them, while armed policemen keep order. In these villages, only the Muslims were voting in their separate electorates. The contest was between a Muslim Leaguer and a candidate of the Unionist Party. Every voter, while I watched the proceedings, was illiterate. After their names had been verified in the register, they filed up to a table where the agents of the two parties sat with the returning officer. He asked each peasant for whom he wished to vote and then, marked his ballot paper with a cross. There was and could be no secrecy.

In other provinces, a much fairer method has been adopted. In the Frontier Province, coloured boxes are used, green for the Muslim League and red for the Congress. The voter goes behind a screen and drops his ballot into the box of his choice, without marking it at all....

... [Political] expenditure in the Punjab is virtually unlimited. I gather that few candidates spend less than 7500 pounds (Rs 1,00,000) and may spend twice as much. I should have doubted these figures had they not been confirmed, firstly, by a banker whom the candidates importuned for loans and then by experienced British officials. It is customary for the candidate to entertain his supporters on the night before they vote at a lavish feast and he may also feed them, as I witnessed for myself, openly at the poll: Spirits, though all three religions, Hindu, Muslim and Sikh, forbid them, are also freely dispensed. The competition for vehicles is so hot that candidates must spend vast sums to hire them.

Votes, moreover, are bought outright on a considerable scale. Of violence also, there has been too much. Apart from all this, many of the candidates are feudal landlords whose power over their neighbours' lives is immense. Against these magnates, few tenants dare cast a public vote....

... The broad fact is that the Unionists, who have been in office for more than 20 years, are identified in everyone's mind with the bureaucracy. They are loyalists who warmly backed the war effort and for eight years past, they have had control of the police....

Over the greater part of the province of the Punjab, there are no peasants' leagues, and trade unions exist only in the larger towns. Three great powers confront the Muslim peasants—the feudal landlord, the Government and the mosque. He adjusts himself to their pressure as best as he can. Of these three, only the mosque can be active everywhere on behalf of the Muslim League. It has created a fear that Islam is in danger. The clergy tell the simple peasants

that their hope of salvation depends on their voting for the League and sometimes they enforce this appeal by parading the roads with a copy of the Koran.

I have heard the loudspeakers of their cars shouting the slogans: "A curse on the infidel Hindus". The result is that a wave of communal feeling has gripped the Muslims of this province who form a slight majority of its population, and with rare exceptions, they have rallied to the demand for Pakistan. Few have thought it out in detail, but in Lahore, the average man who can read a newspaper, the clerk or the shopkeeper, does at least know dimly what it means. He will tell you that he wants a state in which the Muslims will rule. I got no further in questioning the well educated upper stratum. When I asked whether Pakistan would build a tariff wall against Hindustan, even the candidates answered: "That is for the leaders to decide."

This well-bred upper class is not fanatical. On the contrary, their outlook is often progressive. Some of them toy with Communism and many of their women have broken out of the purdah system of seclusion. Fanaticism is the expedient they use to win the masses. The solid motive behind their movement is a dread of the economic power of Hindu industry and finance.

The real issue in this confused election in the Punjab turns on an internal split within the ruling class of Muslims, most of them big landowners. Hitherto, the province has been run by the Unionists, who represented the landed interest of all three creeds, Sikhs and Hindus as well as the Muslims. It is a conservative, but not a communal party. It could control the Provincial Legislative Assembly but had no mass organisation behind it. Though it refused to submit to the dictation of the Muslim League its Muslim members have declared themselves in favour of Pakistan.

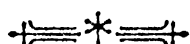
The Muslim League, on the contrary, is a solidly communal party, and by modern methods of propaganda, it is building up a powerful mass organisation.

The odds are that it will prove to be the stronger party of the two, but it cannot secure a clear majority in the Provincial Assembly—a bewildering fact, for, if Pakistan is ever to come into being, the Punjab must be its pivot.

The Punjab, I should warn the reader, is like no other province in India. Its distinction was that in the old days its 'martial races' were the mainstay of the Army. The Government rewarded its loyalty with an imposing system of irrigation. Thanks to its canals, it is rich by Indian standards, however ill its wealth is distributed. Perhaps, for these reasons, perhaps, for lack of first-rate leaders, the Congress was never able to win it over. It can hold its own in the towns: it has the Hindu minority and some of the Sikhs behind it, but it has never established itself solidly in the villages, as it has done elsewhere. And that, in turn, may explain why the atmosphere of politics in this province reeks of materialism and intrigue....

About these elections, I have said enough. But, already the terror of the coming famine overshadows the people's lives. The cold fact, officially reported, is that a general failure of the rains threatens a deficit of three million tons of grain. In our travels we have seen parched pastures and emaciated cattle. Here, in the Punjab, there will be no famine, but in less favoured regions, the dearth has already begun.

If a few weeks, scarcity will bring hunger, and hunger disease. How fully the Government has learned the lessons of the Bengal famine the events will show. It will have to fight a ruthless battle with panic, corruption and greed. But whatever it may do, it cannot stave off famine, unless we stunt ourselves to come to its aid....



16. Congress-Akali-Unionist Coalition to Form the Punjab Ministry

Extracts from a news report, 'Why talks with league failed'. *Hindustan Times*, 7 March 1946.

Lahore, March 6. "I am happy to say that the Punjab has been saved from Section 93 Rule," said the Congress President, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, in an interview at the Lahore airport today....

The Congress President said he had told the leader of the Congress-Akali-Unionist coalition, Malik Khizr Hyat Khan, that "the way in which things have been going on in the Punjab for the last eight years must come to an end. He (Malik Khizr Hyat Khan) should now work in a new world—the Congress world...."

17. League Rejects the Punjab Coalition Ministry

Extracts from a news report, 'League warning of grave consequences'. *Hindustan Times*, 7 March 1946.

Lahore, March 6. Nawabzada Liaquat Ali Khan, General Secretary of the All India Muslim League, addressing a gathering of Muslims in Lahore this evening, uttered a warning that grave consequences would follow the attempt of the Governor of the Punjab to inflict on the Punjab Muslims a non-Muslim Ministry against their declared will....

18. Muslim Students Demonstrate Against the Punjab Coalition

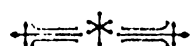
News report, 'Anti-Khizr Demonstrations'. *Hindustan Times*, 7 March 1946.

Lahore, March 6. Muslim students of local colleges abstained from attending their classes today and went round the town in groups staging anti-Khizr Hyat demonstrations. A party of about 300 students carrying the Muslim League flag marched towards Malik Khizr Hyat's residence. The demonstration has so far been peaceful.—API.

19. League and Congress Jockey for Power in the Punjab

Extracts from an article, 'Punjab Ministry'. *Hindustan Times*, 7 March 1946.

... The Muslim League flirted with the Akalis, offered them a bribe of 25 per cent representation in the Cabinet and in the services, and agreed to treat them as the sole representatives of the Sikhs. The Akalis, fearing the reaction among the Sikh community if they joined the Pakistan camp, turned to the Congress and demanded a price somewhat lower than the League. [The League] did not throw up its hands after its failure to rope in the Akalis. It approached the Congress Party and, as disclosed by Maulana Azad, it came to a provisional agreement which Mr Jinnah, however, vetoed. The League leaders in the Punjab are not themselves fanatical; they have used fanaticism as a means to win the vote of the masses. The attitude of the Congress Party has been consistent and reasonable throughout. After the League, it is the biggest party and it should have headed the coalition. Instead, it has made a sacrifice ... and accepted the leadership of the Unionist leader Malik Khizr Hyat Khan....



20. Nehru's Speech at Dhaka Condemning Violence

Extracts from a news report, 'Congress is real people's panchayat'. *Free Press Journal*, 11 March 1946.

Dacca, March 11. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, in a 65 minutes speech before a large gathering here this afternoon, said that his life's mission would be fulfilled the day when there would be real 'Jai' to 'Hind', when 40 crores of people of Hindustan would have achieved their independence....

Explaining the role of the Congress, as distinct from other parties in the field of Indian politics, such as the Muslim League, the Hindu Mahasabha and Communists, he affirmed that Congress was the only organisation which spoke with the voice of the people....

Panditji added that though he had not come here in connection with the impending elections, he could not say that victory in the elections was not necessary. Victory in the elections would add strength to forces fighting for Indian independence.

He asked the people to avoid violent methods as they were against the country's interest. He regretted that in Bombay and Delhi mobs had indulged in acts of arson and senseless destruction of public property....

21. Congress Policy Statements

Proceedings of the Working Committee, Indian National Congress; Bombay, 12-15 March 1946. *Indian Annual Register* (1946); Vol. I, pp. 122-4.

A meeting of the Working Committee was held at Bombay from March 12 to 15, 1946. Maulana Abul Kalam Azad presided. The members present were Sarojini Naidu, Jawaharlal Nehru, Vallabhbhai Patel, Rajendra Prasad, Pattabhi Sitaramayya, Shankar Rao Deo, Govind Ballabh Pant, Profulla Chandra Ghosh, Asaf Ali, Harekrishna Mehtab and J.B. Kriplani. Gandhiji was present at the afternoon sittings of the Committee. The Committee passed the following resolutions:

(1) Food-crisis

Whereas the war and its aftereffects have already created a serious food situation which has been materially aggravated by the failure of rains in many parts of India with the result that the country is faced with both food and cloth famine, it is essential that the policy of the Government and the people should be one at this time of crisis. Hunger makes no distinction between high and low, Hindu and Muslim, or any other. But the real burden of suffering however, inevitably will fall on the poor. In the circumstances the Working Committee would like to make its policy clear.

1. The first thing in these difficult times is for the people not to lose heart. Everyone should realise his personal duty and perform it to the best of his ability, believing that if everyone acted likewise India will be able to surmount all difficulties with courage and confidence and be able to save thousands of poor lives.

Every villager and townsman should, therefore, do the best he can for his neighbour and for himself.

2. Everyone who possess any land should in the shortest time grow such foodstuffs on it as he can. Cultivable land lying waste should be speedily brought under the plough and every facility should be given for this purpose by the State.

3. After fulfilling his own minimum requirements from his produce he should make the remainder available for others who may be in need.
4. Preference should be given to food crops over money crops wherever practicable.
5. People should sink ordinary wells and dig tanks wherever there is scarcity of water and all facilities for this purpose should be given by the State and local bodies.
6. It is duty of the rich today to live simply and divert their energy and wealth towards productive and constructive activities for the relief of distress.
7. Every effort should be made to secure supplies from abroad, but we should not feel helpless in any case. On the contrary, we must produce all we can in India and be prepared to face all emergencies with the resource[s] available. It must be remembered that even the receipt of additional imports or the raising of additional crops will not serve the purpose in view unless the supplies reach in time the starving places and are equitably distributed there.
8. All food should be economically used and expenditure on occasions of marriages and other ceremonies must be avoided.
9. Processes of canning and preservation of fruits should be encouraged and widely adopted so that full use may be made of all available fruits and no part there of may be wasted.
10. It is the duty of the State to put all their available resources of manpower, technical skill and mechanical appliances, whether civil or military, for growing, preserving and transporting food to wherever necessary. All exports of cereals, foodstuffs, oilseeds, oilcakes, groundnuts, oil and other edibles should be absolutely prohibited.
11. The State should sink deep wells and adopt other means of water supply wherever necessary. Demobilised and discharged personnel from the defence services including the INA should be utilised for increasing the production of foodstuffs.
12. The Committee expects the nation to make all necessary sacrifice for relieving distress in the country and for making successful any reasonable schemes of rationing and procurement and any measure for checking hoarding, black marketing and corruption that may have to be taken on hand.
13. It is clear that just as it is the duty of the public to cooperate in all helpful ways, so it is the primary duty of the Government to understand and fulfil the essential needs of the people. Measures for meeting the serious situation cannot be fully successful and effective unless power vests in the people.
14. So far as want of cloth is concerned it is the duty of the State and the people alike to render every assistance to the villagers in order to enable them to produce by their own effort enough Khadi in the villages. The State should provide facilities for cotton growing or cotton itself and instruments of production and instructors where necessary.
15. Congress Committees and Congressmen are advised to help in every way to give effect to the recommendations in this resolution.

(2) International Situation

The Working Committee have noted with grave concern the growing tension in the international situation, resulting in open recrimination between the Great Powers and attempts on their part to secure or hold on to colonial areas and vantage points and create satellite States, which may lead to possible future conflicts. The war that has recently ended has, in spite of the professions made in the course of it, neither ended the imperialist domination of subject countries nor the era of power politics. The old imperialism still continues and in addition new types of imperialism are growing. The recent UNO Conference in London is startling evidence of the fact that

instead of a new order of free and united nations evolving, there is disunity among the leading nations and a lack of freedom over vast areas. Oil is still the lure of imperial domination, and security and preservation of the so-called lifelines of empire or strategic outposts are made the excuses for expansion as well as retention of colonial areas. This continuation of the old and discredited policy which has led already to two disastrous World Wars, is likely to result in yet another war, on a more colossal and destructive scale.

It is evident that peace and freedom cannot grow out of these seeds of continuing conflict and war. Imperialist policy has to be discarded not only in the interests of subject nations but also to rid the world of the peril that might overwhelm humanity. It has thus become urgently necessary to end foreign domination over the countries of Asia and Africa, and for foreign armies to be withdrawn from all such countries, and notably from Indonesia, Manchuria, Indo-China, Iran and Egypt. India still remains the crux of the problem of Asian Freedom and on the independence of India depends the freedom of many countries and the peace of the world.

(3) **Indians in South Africa**

The Working Committee of the Indian National Congress are of opinion that the disabilities of the Indian settlers in South Africa constitute a blot on humanity and a slur on the civilisation of the West. As the submission to His Excellency the Viceroy of the Indian Deputation from South Africa shows, the disabilities are an unbroken tale of progressive prejudice against Asiatics defined as "any Turk and any member of a race or tribe whose national home is in Asia but which does not include any member of the Jewish or Syrian race or a person belonging to the race or class known as the Cape Malay," and of broken promises and declarations. A civilisation that requires for its protection a series of legal enactments imposing political and economic restrictions on coloured and Asiatic peoples must contain seeds of future wars and its own destruction.

The Committee are of opinion that the contemplated breach of trade relations between India and the Union of South Africa is the mildest step that the Government of India could have taken. The Committee would ask the Government of India forthwith to withdraw their High Commissioner, if the Union Government would not suspend the proposed legislation, pending the convening of a Round Table Conference between the two governments to consider the whole policy of the Union Government against non-White peoples of the earth.

The Committee are painfully surprised to find Field Marshal Smuts, the Premier of the Union, dismissing, on the untenable plea of regarding the proposed anti-Asiatic bill as a domestic affair, the right of the Indian Government and, by parity of the reasoning, of the other Allied Powers, of friendly intervention. The Committee hold that at this time of the day it is not open to any State, however powerful it may be, to refuse to listen to the public opinion of the world as voiced through its different States with reference to any legislation regarded by them as [having] an inhuman character or as amounting to a slur on the self-respect of the races comprising such a State.

The Committee venture to advise the victorious Allies to take notice of the contemplated action of the Government of South Africa inasmuch as the late war would have been fought in vain if now the persistence by the Union Government of South Africa in the bar sinister against Asiatic races and coloured people inhabiting that subcontinent is maintained.

To the Indian Deputation, from South Africa the Committee would say that whilst they (the Committee) and, indeed, the whole of India, irrespective of parties or communities, are

with them in their just struggle and would lend them all the moral weight they can, they should realise that the brunt of the unequal struggle will have to be borne by them, and the Committee feel assured that the Indians in South Africa will worthily carry out the example set by them years ago of vindicating their self-respect and that of the Motherland by the noble rule of self-suffering.

The Committee would, however, faint hope, even at the eleventh hour, that in the place of the indefensible law of the jungle, which the policy as revealed by the contemplated legislation enunciates, the Government of the Union of South Africa and its white settlers would listen to reason and the appeal of the moral law by which mankind lives.

(4) Recent Disturbances

The Working Committee of the Indian National Congress are of opinion that the recent disturbances created by the people in Bombay, Delhi, Calcutta and other places were in every way harmful and were an obstacle in the way of Congress. These included arson and incendiarism whether of private shops or public places, looting especially destruction of food stuffs, frightening pedestrians, compelling Europeans to remove their hats and otherwise molesting them. All these acts were manifestly against the policy of non-violence adopted by the Congress and were derogatory to national dignity. Whilst there is nothing but unmixed condemnation of popular frenzy, this Committee without prejudging the military action taken in order to deal with the recent outburst of violence, are of opinion that the popular belief, generally and justly, has been that such action has been taken in excess of necessity and in order to strike terror in the hearts of the people and therefore the military have bulletted passersby or even innocent people, men, women or children standing in their own galleries. Any such action at the present moment, instead of cowing down the populace, has the effect of infuriating it. The Committee, therefore, ask the Government to institute an inquiry into the military action taken in the various places and hope that the inquiry will be open and public and will have on it representatives with judicial qualifications and enjoying public confidence. At the same time the Committee hope that the people will observe restraint befitting the Congress and help the conference between the Cabinet mission and the representatives of the people to carry on their work in a calm atmosphere.

22. Nehru's Role in Impending Cabinet Mission Talks

Extracts from a letter by Jawaharlal Nehru to C. Rajagopalachari; Bombay, 13 March 1946. Access No. 1426, Roll No. 9; C. Rajagopalachari Papers (1946); National Archives of India.

Bombay, 13-3-46.

My Dear Rajaji,

... But you exhibit a lack of knowledge of what I am when you say that I am likely to play a decisive part in the impending talks. You should know me better. I am too much of a vagabond by temperament to do any such thing. That trait in me keeps me more or less healthy in mind and body, makes me popular, and also makes me rather ineffective. So never expect too much from me.... The UP is the only province where you are likely to see a break in the Pakistan front. I do not know the results yet but I know that most Muslim seats there have been hard

contests and the Muslim League has had a heavy time. We fought God on the economic front. A tough job....

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru.

23. Political Parties Clash in Kanpur Elections

Extracts from a news report, 'Congress leaders unleash communal riot'. *People's Age*, 24 March 1946.

Cawnpore, March 13. Afraid that they would lose heavily if the elections were held freely and fairly, Congressmen of Cawnpore have, it seems, decided to go to any lengths to terrorise the workers and disrupt their unity. On February 11, they broke the workers' general strike against the cut in rations with the help of the Police, owners and hooligans. On March 12, during the elections for the General and Scheduled Caste seats, Congressmen engineered a communal riot which resulted in four deaths and injuries to 150.

From the masters and mistries inside the mills to Nationalist papers like the *Pratap* and the *National Herald*—the entire propaganda machinery of the Congress is now propagating that the Communists with the help of the Scheduled Castes' Federation and the Muslim League brought about the riot. But the facts reveal clearly who are really responsible for it, in their attempt to secure seats in the Legislature even at the cost of bloodshed.

Through their tactics, Cawnpore Congressmen have completely lost the confidence of the mass of *achchuts* (untouchables). They were afraid that if the elections were held peacefully, they would lose heavily against the Scheduled Castes' Federation candidate. So they decided to work up anti-*achchut* feelings among caste-Hindu middle-class people, create clashes, and thus disturb the polling on March 12, and terrorise the untouchable voters.

Stunt Hartal to Engineer Clashes

On the night of the 11th, a meeting was held in the Tilak Hall in which the Congress leaders delivered the most poisonous speeches against the Scheduled Castes' Federation (S.C.F.), the League and the Communist Party.

The same Congress leaders who had refused to organise a hartal in protest against the Bombay massacre, decided in this meeting to give a call for hartal in the city on March 12, for no reason whatsoever.

Their game was clear. They wanted to mobilise their followers—mainly petty shopkeepers—and create disturbances with their help at the various polling booths.

In fact, the trouble started that very night. While the S.C.F. procession was going through Gwaltoli, stones were thrown on it from shops and houses on the roadside. For some time, fighting with brickbats went on. Then the processionists had to retreat and while doing so, they attacked the shops from which stones were being hurled, and threw the shops' stocks on to the road.

Immediately rumours were spread in the city that the Communists and the S.C.F. men had looted Hindu shops in Gwaltoli, while the fact is that not a single Communist was present on the spot. Prominent residents of the area have testified to this fact.

Congress Terror against Achchuts at Booths

The next day, from the beginning it was clear that the polling was going in favour of the SCF candidate. At every polling station it could be seen that while white-clothed gentry of the town was coming to vote for the Congress, ill-clad unkempt *achchut* workers were solidly behind the SCF candidate.

In a few hours Congressmen became desperate and decided to strike. Congress supporters began to tear the SCF voters' lists, pull down SCF tents and pelt them with stones. Such things took place at almost every polling station....

Winning Seats through Communal War

By bringing about a communal riot, Congressmen have won the Scheduled Caste seat. They have also succeeded in momentarily dividing the ranks of the workers and in giving the excuse to the District Magistrate to clamp down on workers' meetings.

The ban on workers' meetings would be a heavy handicap against the Red Flag candidate in the coming election next week. It would help the mistries and owners' dalals to get away with their terror tactics against all Red Flag supporters and militants. Thus, Congressmen think, they have made their victory sure in the elections for the Labour seats on March 25....

24. Delhi Nationalist Muslim Rally

Extracts from a news report, 'Over 100,000 attend grand rally in Delhi'. *Hindustan Times*, 16 April 1946.

Delhi was the scene last week of the widely-publicised Convention of Muslim League legislators and a grand rally of Nationalist Muslims of all shades of opinion.

The fire-eating in which Muslim League leaders, particularly Mr Jinnah, Sir Firoz Khan Noon, Chaudhri Khaliqzaman and Mr Rauf Shah, indulged at the convention and at public meetings created a lot of bad feeling in the city. But the rally of Nationalist Muslims held in Urdu Park under the inspiring leadership of Maulana Hussain Ahmed Madni, which attracted more than 100,000 Muslims, clearly demonstrated that the Delhi Muslims are not with the Muslim League and will throw in their weight on the side of sanity and communal harmony.

The Nationalist Muslims' rally can be compared in size and representative character to the All India Azad Muslim Conference held in Delhi some years ago under the presidency of the late Mr Allah Baksh.

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, who addressed the rally, was given a tremendous ovation by the huge gathering of Muslims. Syed Atta Ullah Shah Bukhari, the great mass orator kept the audience spellbound for more than six hours. His speech lasted from midnight to 6 a.m. Muslim Leaguers dared not create any trouble at the meeting.

Progressive Demands

All the non-League parties, including the Ahrars, Jamiat-ul-Ulema-i-Hind and the Muslim Majlis, were represented at the meeting. Those who attended this meeting as well as the public meeting held earlier under the auspices of the Muslim League say that the attendance at the Nationalists' meeting was about five times the attendance at the League meeting.

On the constitutional question, the Muslim Majlis and the All India Nationalist Muslim Parliamentary Board, which between them represent the entire body of non-League Muslims,

passed resolutions supporting the setting up of a single Constituent Assembly, immediate establishment of a National Government at the Centre and the right of the Indian States subjects to send their elected representatives to the constitution-making body. They voiced their strong opposition to the scheme of confederation and demanded the introduction of joint electorates. Thus on all major issues, they supported the stand taken by the Congress.

Election Results

Asked about the strength of the Nationalist Muslims, one of their spokesman said: "We had to fight the worst from the religious fanaticism in the recent elections. Leaguers have had an open field for carrying on poisonous propaganda among the Muslims under the patronage of British officials. Judged from the number of votes, we claim we have not fared badly in the elections in the provinces where we could approach the Muslim masses.

"For instance, in the United Provinces, we got about 35 per cent votes, but we have captured only 12 out of 66 Muslim seats. In Sind, we got about 40 per cent of the Muslim votes. In the NWF Province we polled a majority of the Muslim votes and if there had not been a rift among the Nationalist Muslim groups, the Muslim League would have been completely routed and a crushing defeat would have been inflicted on the Congress renegade, Mr Abdul Qaiyum.

"In several provinces, including Bengal, we were prevented by organised hooliganism from reaching the Muslim masses. Introduce adult suffrage and guarantee neutrality on the part of officials, and we can finish the Muslim League completely." ...

25. North-West Frontier Province Rejects Muslim League

News report, 'Pathans are against Pakistan'. *Free Press Journal*, 16 April 1946.

Peshawar, April 15. "It is all through the sacrifices of its people that India has reached a stage when it must be free. I am now convinced that the British Cabinet Mission is bent upon giving power to Indians," said Dr Khan Sahib, Premier of NWF Province, addressing a public meeting held here on Saturday night in observance of the Jallianwala Bagh day.

Dr Khan Sahib, added: "Both England and America have agreed to the principle of granting freedom to India. The only question left to be decided is how and to whom to impart power. The British Government now fully knows which of the political organisations deserves power.

"It is all due to the sacrifices of the Congress that India has reached the threshold of independence and has gone a stage further as compared with 1919 when even a verbal protest against the Rowlat Act could not be tolerated. No country has achieved freedom through talks and slogans. These lovers of Pakistan always shirked direct action and will again run into their holes at the time of the next struggle, leaving poor and ignorant masses in the lurch.

I would welcome a revolution in India just to prove as to who is a man of action and who is not."

Jinnah is No Qaid-e-Azam

Criticising Mr Jinnah's remarks that Pathans were illiterate and ignorant and that was why they voted against Pakistan, Dr Khan Sahib said, "Only a free man can understand the real worth of a Pathan. What can Mr Jinnah, who himself is a slave, understand the value of Pathans. It is a pity that the Pathans who will win India's freedom are called illiterate. Such a man can never be called Qaid-e-Azam. All those who call him Qaid-e-Azam are not true Muslims."

Pathans are Against Pakistan

Refuting the statements of Choudhuri Khaliquzzaman and Mr Suhrawardi that Pathans were in favour of Pakistan, Dr Khan Sahib said that Pathans stood for complete independence of India and they invited all Indians to fight along with them shoulder to shoulder for India's freedom. All those persons who wanted to drag India into a civil war were cheats and they would be the worst sufferers.

Dr Khan Sahib appealed for unity and asked the people to face the critical juncture with courage and bravery in the cause of India's freedom.

Khan Ali Gulkhan, who presided said that the Pathans who were called illiterate had given a clear verdict against Pakistan and the same verdict would again be given if Mr Jinnah wanted reelection. An illiterate Pathan, he said, was far better than Mr Jinnah himself because a Pathan knew the worth of freedom and could practically sacrifice even his life for the freedom of his country. Pathans were wide-awake and nobody could compel them to accept any decision contrary to their wishes.

Hakim Abdul Ali Naqvi appealed to all the political leaders now in Delhi to reach an agreement among themselves.—API

26. Dissent within Congress Despite Winning Elections in Madras Province

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Madras Province for the first half of April 1946. Public (General) Department, Government of Madras (1946); Tamil Nadu State Archives.

Political

The Congress celebrated their victory in the elections by holding meetings and processions in the city and in a number of places in the mofussil, but the question of leadership still has to be settled and is the burning topic at present. Following rumours of differences, Messrs Prakasam, Madhava Menon and Kamraj Nadar, Presidents respectively of the Andhra, Kerala and Tamil Nad Provincial Congress Committees were summoned to Delhi by the High Command. It has since been announced in the papers that the High Command has recommended Mr Rajagopalachari as the leader though Maulana Azad has carefully stressed the point that the recommendation is only advisory and not mandatory. At a meeting of the Congress Legislature party on the 18th this recommendation was rejected. Further developments are awaited. It is interesting to note a move, in this connection, to form a 'Tamil Nad National Congress' with the object of bringing together all persons in Tamilnad, who have faith in Mr Rajagopalachari's leadership.

27. Vallabhbhai Patel on How Britain Should Transfer Power

Extracts from a news report, 'Congress will have no British award'. *Hindustan Times*, 23 April 1946.

The conviction that the Congress Party would be willing to accept international arbitration in the settlement of the present problem in India was expressed by Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel in an interview to Reuter's political correspondent in the course of which he balanced some of the present aspects of the constitutional situation....

If a just and peaceful solution would be helped by submitting the question to international arbitration, Sardar Patel felt that the Congress would be ready to do this.

Sardar Patel said that an alternative which [was] offered was for British to hand over power to the elected representatives either of the Congress or the Muslim League. "If you did that," he observed, "the country would settle the question in no time."

"By constitutional means?" Sardar Patel was asked.

"It cannot be by constitutional means," he replied, adding that although there might be trouble for some time, if power were transferred to one party, the other party would come to terms."

He repeated that there might be some trouble, but added firmly that there would be no civil war—"just a little disturbance here and there. You are bound to get that in a big country." ...

Asked how he envisaged the setting up of the constituent assembly to frame the constitution of independent India, the Sardar replied; "The Congress position has always been to form a constituent assembly on the basis of adult franchise, but that procedure is now out of the question because it will involve enormous delay...."

28. Congress Rhetoric at Local Meetings in the United Provinces

Extracts from Weekly Report No. 27, 5 July 1946. CID Records, Government of the United Provinces (1946); Uttar Pradesh State Archives.

... At a District Kisan Conference at Agra a resolution was adopted asking the public to bring their complaints against Government officials to the District Congress Committee Office. At Azamgarh, Sahdeo Ram urged his audience not to fear Patwaris or Sub-Inspectors and said that if these persons stood in the way they should be killed. At a Congress meeting at Benares, Deonandan Dixit welcomed the issue of new types of weapons to police stations, saying that in the next revolution, police stations, would be raided and weapons seized. Bishambhar Dayal Tripathi of Unao, Mahan Lal Gautam of Aligarh and Soli Batiwala of Bombay when speaking at a Students Congress meeting of Cawnpore said that preparations should be made for a revolution when District Magistrates and Superintendents of Police would be arrested and Government buildings captured. In Ghazipur, Indra Deo Pandey and Dal Singhar Pandey told their audiences that they should forcibly take possession of land of which they had been dispossessed under the Tenancy Act. At the Jhansi Students Congress meeting Lt Ojha and V.P. Sharma of the INA tried to impress their audience with the exploits of the INA by boasting that in Burma they used to polish their boots with the blood of Britishers....

29. Congress Party Budget Estimates for 1946-47

Extracts from a copy of Jawaharlal Nehru's note, 5 August 1946. Access No. 1425, Roll No. 8; C. Rajagopalachari Papers (1946); National Archives of India.

Note on Budget 1946-47

... I suggest that Rs 1,75,000 be the figure provisionally fixed for expenditure during the coming year.

This should not include repairs or changes in Swaraj Bhawan which are likely to cost a considerable sum. We have asked for estimates from architects and engineers and this can be

dealt with separately. I think that in any event the Swaraj Bhawan Budget can be kept separate from our general budget. We have at present a sum of Rs 9382/8/- earmarked for repairs to Swaraj Bhawan.

The Budget for the Volunteer Department, though forming part of the general budget might also be kept separately. We have at present Rs 10,000 earmarked for this. This will certainly cover the year's expenditure.

So far I have dealt with the estimates for expenditure. The income side is always vague and indeterminate. Our normal income from Delegates' fee, Provincial contribution and AICC membership is Rs 20,000. If an annual session is held, as it is bound to be normally within the year, this might add considerably to our income. For the rest we have to rely on donation and purses, as well as such capital as we may possess. We have now received back from the Government Rs 73,000 which had been confiscated. I do not think we need worry very much about the income provided our work is good and produces results.

Jawaharlal Nehru.
5th August 1946.

30. Jawaharlal Nehru Reviews Congress Party Organisation

Extracts from a copy of Jawaharlal Nehru's note, Allahabad, 6 August 1946, to members of the Working Committee, Indian National Congress, for its meeting to be held at Wardha on 8-13 August 1946. Access No. 1425, Roll No. 8; C. Rajagopalachari Papers (1946). National Archives of India.

... Perhaps basically the most important is the question of revitalising and disciplining the entire Congress organisation. All of us know that while on the one hand there is great enthusiasm in the country and the hold of the Congress on the public mind has never been so great as today, yet at the same time the inner weakness of the Congress is more obvious today than it has been at any time during the past quarter of a century. There is a big hiatus between its prestige and its working capacity. Faction grows and the time of most Congressmen is spent in elections or party faction. The organisation, big and powerful as it is, is not big enough or effective enough in the present context of events. It is amorphous and loose and looking in many directions and doubtful of itself. While there is a great deal of talk of constructive work of various kinds, precious little is done....

... Everything ultimately depends on the strength and efficiency of the organisation. Probably the only effective approach is to change the Congress constitution, which has become out-of-date and unwieldy. That has been on our agenda for a long time but it can only be finally tackled by the full session of the Congress.

The Congress organisation means many layers of committees. The top can make a difference, but direct work is done by local committees under the guidance of the Provincial Congress Committees. Any reform must therefore start from below though the initiative for it may and should come from the top.

The AICC office cannot make a vital difference unless the Provincial and local committees get moving. Yet the AICC office can do something worthwhile if it is properly organised and has a good and efficient directorate.

During the last three weeks those in charge of the AICC office have given much thought to this matter and have frequently conferred together to discuss various proposals and suggestions.

The General Secretaries, new to the office, have moved cautiously but have been full of ideas and eager to put them in practice. Shri Sadiq Ali, who has thus far been called the Office Secretary but whose correct designation should be Permanent Secretary, has been a tower of strength with his long experience of working the office. At my suggestion the General Secretaries have presented a large number of notes on various existing and proposed departments....

While I agree with the general trend of these notes and feel convinced that the time has come for the AICC to develop and expand its office, I realise that expansion should depend on the availability of good human material....

Among the departments that need special development are:

1. Congress Organisation

This is of primary importance and I think it should be separated from the general office. It should have a number of competent inspectors. At present we have only one and he has done good work. Apart from engaging additional inspectors, we should tour continually and send reports, I should like some members of the Working Committee to take charge on our behalf, of one or more provinces for this purpose....

2. Foreign Department

This should include Overseas Indians as a section....

3. Labour

We have no such department at present but in view of the changing economic situation and the wave of strikes, it seems necessary for us to have one....

6. Volunteers

A Volunteer department has also been started. This is in charge of Major General Shah Nawaz Khan. It is proposed to have women's section attached to it. The actual work of volunteering will of course be done locally and through Provincial Congress Committees. The AICC Volunteer Department will guide, advise, direct, help in training, and inspect. Our policy will be to work through the PCC's as we feel that Congress Volunteers in any province should either be directly under PCC or recognised by them and in some way affiliated to them. Certain difficulties have occasionally arisen in regard to the organisation of INA volunteers. If these are under PCC then no difficulty arises. Otherwise they will have to be considered as outside organisation.

7. Women's Department

This has been in existence. It should be expanded.

There are at present two other departments or sections, Library and Economic and Research. The Library has to be expanded and properly catalogued. I am asking the Economic and Research section to prepare a monthly note on the economic condition of India for circulation among members of the WC [Working Committee].

I propose also to have a monthly report on the state of the Congress Organisation.

We must have Urdu and Hindi sections and we propose to develop them.

Whether we should have a special Minorities Department dealing with minority problems as well as tribal problems and excluded areas, is for the WC to consider. I think it would be desirable provided we get good men or women to run it....

Swaraj Bhawan itself requires extensive repairs and renovation. This is something apart from our normal budget and I think we should deal with it separately. It is proposed to build a small guest house in the Swaraj Bhawan garden....

Jawaharlal Nehru,
6th August, 1946.

31. Congress Policy Statements

Extracts from proceedings of the Working Committee, Indian National Congress; Wardha, 8-13 August 1946. *Indian Annual Register (1946)*; Vol. I, pp. 107-9.

Labour Policy

The Working Committee view with deep concern the intense and widespread labour unrest which has in recent months involved numerous industries and services in the country in large-scale and prolonged stoppages, entailing heavy material loss and serious hardships to the community as well as the working-class. The Committee are aware of the fact that the labour upheaval through which the country has been passing is largely occasioned by the serious privations to which the workers have been subjected in consequence of the tremendous economic maladjustments created by the war, especially the excessive rise in the cost of living that has remained uncompensated to a very large extent. The Committee are further of opinion that the labour troubles in the country have been aggravated by the total absence of a well-defined national plan or policy in dealing with the claims of this class, by the delay in redressing grievances by means of conciliation, arbitration, and adjudication, and by the confusion arising out of the uncoordinated action taken in the matter in different parts of the country.

The sympathy of the Congress with the working-class in its struggle to improve its economic position and its status is too well-known to require reiteration and, in furtherance of this, the Committee urge on Governments and employers in the country to take early steps to satisfy the legitimate needs and aspirations of the working-class and to remove every cause of genuine discontent by arranging for an impartial examination of the conditions and complaints of the employees and by prompt settlement of points of disagreement by processes of conciliation and arbitration.

The Committee feel further that it is necessary in the general interest to point out that avoidable strikes cannot have the backing of public opinion, and in view of the dire need of the country for more goods and services, hasty or ill-conceived stoppages and the refusal to take advantage of the available means of settlement by negotiation, conciliation and arbitration, constitute a distinct disservice to the community and the working-class itself.

The Committee in this connection emphasise that in particular industries and services, which are essential for the existence of the community and on which the continuity of public administration depends, should be immune from dislocation by strikes and lockouts and all disputes between the employees and employers (including governments) should be finally settled by arbitration and adjudication.

The Committee have also, with regret, to take note of the growing lack of discipline and disregard of obligations on the part of the workers which have become evident in some recent labour disputes, and would stress the need for discipline and respect for the rights and requirements of others and of the community as a whole, as the indispensable foundation of a strong trade union movement and the basis of economic progress and orderly social life.

The Committee understands that the undesirable features of the labour situation are due in part to the efforts of certain individuals and sections to exploit the ignorance of the workers and the need of the community for ulterior aims, political or other, and this makes it all the more incumbent on Congressmen to develop further contacts with labour and serve its cause to the best of their ability, and to discriminate between occasions on which labour action deserves their support and those which call for restraint or dissuasion.

While the means suggested by the Working Committee for improving the relations between employees and employers and for promoting amicable settlement of disputes will help to relieve the situation, the Committee are convinced that the inflated level of prices which still persists is retarding the restoration of normal economic conditions, and is leading to a vicious race between prices and wages, accentuating the existing difficulties and that no lasting solution of these difficulties will be available so long as a definite policy regarding a future price structure does not take shape and an orderly and just basis is not provided for the economic relations in the country. While these fundamental problems can be handled only by a Central Government the Committee feel that such integration of policy and action in this matter as is possible in the provincial sphere should be attempted immediately.

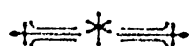
Hindustan Mazdoor Sevak Sangh

Whereas the Congress has to play an increasingly active role in helping the working-class to organise itself on sound and healthy lines to achieve its rightful place in industry and society and to make a progressive contribution towards raising the economic and social standards in this country, the Committee have come to the conclusion that a central agency should be provided to encourage, support and coordinate the efforts and activities of Congressmen in the field of labour organisation and the service of the working class. The Committee note with satisfaction that the Hindustan Mazdoor Sevak Sangh has been functioning in this field for a number of years, and has built up a policy, tradition and machinery well calculated to advance and fulfil the aims which the Congress has in view in relation to labour. The Committee recommend to Congressmen to make the fullest use of the facilities provided by the Sangh for the service of the working-class, and to accept its guidance in dealing with labour questions.

In order to give effect to the above resolution a Committee consisting of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, Lala Gulzarilal Nanda and P.H. Patwardhan be appointed to confer with the Hindustan Mazdoor Sevak Sangh and report to the Working Committee.

Congress Committee and Praja Mandals in States

The attention of the Working Committee has been drawn to the fact that there is some conflict between Praja Mandals and Congress Committees in certain States, more especially in Indore and in other parts of Central India. The general policy of the Congress has long been to encourage the formation of Praja Mandals and like organisations in the States and to discourage the formation of Congress Committees there. This policy holds, and therefore any existing Congress Committee in a State must avoid any conflict on the political or parliamentary field with established Praja Mandals and work in cooperation with them, the political policy being laid down by the Praja Mandals. Further no new Congress Committees should be formed in the States or affiliated by a Provincial Congress Committee. This resolution shall be adhered to till suitable provisions are made for the States in a revision of the Congress Constitution.



32. M.K. Gandhi's Message to Interim Government

News report, 'Gandhiji's advice to new ministers'. *Hindustan Times*, 3 September 1946.

Sardar Patel, Dr Rajendra Prasad, Mr Sarat Bose and Mr Jagjivan Ram, who went to Bhangi Colony for Gandhiji's blessings before going to the Viceroy's House on Monday morning, received a written message as Gandhiji was observing his weekly day of silence.

The message urged the new Ministers to remember the imperative need for immediate abolition of the salt tax and thereby taking Swaraj to the homes of the poor masses of India; to remember the Dandi March and also the pledge to abolish untouchability and to identify themselves with khadi; and to concentrate all efforts for the achievement of Hindu-Muslim unity.

33. Delhi Muslims Celebrate Interim Government

Extracts from a news report, 'Muslims participate in celebrations'. *Hindustan Times*, 3 September 1946.

... Muslim residents at Ballimaran, Baradari and Paharganj, predominantly Muslim areas, also participated in illuminating their shops and buildings and hoisted [the] Tricolour, Ahrar and Jamiat-ul-Ulema flags together. —API.

34. Public Enthusiasm on Formation of Interim Government

Extracts from a news report, 'India's first popular administration'. *Hindustan Times*, 3 September 1946.

New Delhi, Monday. The first popular Indian Government took over in Delhi today, and this ancient capital of India, which has been witness to the rise and fall of so many empires, saw for the first time a change of government as the result of a bloodless revolution.

Although the Congress leaders had discouraged demonstrations and the police authorities had applied Section 144 of the Criminal Procedure Code, crowds gathered both at Gandhiji's camp and in front of the outer gates of the Viceroy's House to witness the great event. Cries of 'Jai Hind' greeted the national leaders as they arrived. As the crowds stood in front of the entrance to the North Block of the Secretariat they read the motto on the main arch: "Liberty will not descend to a people. People must raise themselves to Liberty. It's blessing that must be earned before it can be enjoyed." Sixty years of political struggle and a whole generation's untold sacrifices lie behind the event they witnessed today.

At ten o'clock Sardar Patel, Dr Rajendra Prasad, Mr Jagjivan Ram and Mr Sarat Chandra Bose went to Gandhiji's camp in Bhangi Colony to pay homage to the author of this bloodless revolution and seek his blessings. It was a simple and touching ceremony.

Before they left for Bhangi Colony, Birla House gave a ceremonial send-off to Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, Dr Rajendra Prasad and Mr Jagjivan Ram who have been staying there as the guests of Mr G.D. Birla. A large number of men and women participated in the picturesque function. After recitation of verses from the Gita and the singing of hymns, Mrs R.D. Birla made auspicious offerings to the leaders and garlanded them.

There was a friendly demonstration outside Mr Asaf Ali's house at 2, Windsor Place by groups of Muslims and an impressive guard of honour furnished by Ahrar volunteers carrying red flags bearing the crescent.

At Bhangī Colony a huge crowd had collected to cheer the new Government Members. The entire colony was decorated with Tricolours and little boys did brisk sale of tiny flags....

35. Plight of Congress Muslims in Bengal

Letter from Ashrafuddin Ahmad Chowdhury, a Congressman of Calcutta, to Jawaharlal Nehru; Calcutta, 17 September 1946. File No. P-5; All India Congress Committee Papers (1946); Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

Calcutta, 17-9-1946.

My Dear Panditji,

I met you in Calcutta long before 1942. I tried to have an interview with you through your private secretary when you came to Calcutta in December last. But for your want of time, I could not succeed. I sought your interview on a specific matter and that was about Congress Membership affairs. I am an humble Congress worker and have tried to render what service I could since the Non-Cooperation days. I hope you remember me.

I approach you today as the President of the Indian National Congress on an important problem which we are facing from a long time particularly since the 16th August last when the terrible carnage in Calcutta took place. You must have heard from Maulana Abul Kalam Azad all about the murderous attempts, goondaism and hooliganism of the Muslim League rowdies during the last election campaign in Bengal. I need hardly take up your valuable time in narrating the story.

Since the 16th August, Muslim League assassins [assassins] are shadowing the Congress and Nationalist Muslims from place to place. My house was raided on the 16th afternoon by the Leaguers with deadly weapons. Fortunately I was not in my room then and thus escaped from the assassin's [assassin's] dagger. Moulvi Syed Nausher Ali, ex-speaker of the Bengal Assembly was providentially saved. So far as I am informed one whole family of Congress Muslims was killed in Calcutta during the time of the disturbances by the Muslim Leaguers. Another young Congress Muslim is also reported to have been killed by the Leaguers. I have not yet the full reports of Mofussil area on account of continual postal irregularities, but I have this much [to] report that almost all our Muslim workers throughout the province are being threatened and intimidated by the Leaguers. This in a nutshell is the condition which we are in. I have shifted my place of residence twice and yet do not feel safe. Bengal Congress organisation during the dark days has not even cared to enquire of us except in the case of Maulvi Syed Nausher Ali. I am glad to inform you that some individual Congress friends are taking a keen interest about us, but they have their limitations. It is a Goonda Raj that is ruling us in this province and so we cannot expect any assistance from that quarter to save our lives and properties. It is the Ministry itself which is responsible for creating this hell in our part of the country. Although the number of Muslims in the Congress is smaller than that of the Hindus in Bengal, yet there are thousands of Muslim Congress members scattered all over the province. Our active Muslim Congress workers in different districts and villages run the risk of their lives all over the province in the present condition created by the League. There is hardly any organisation or sincere friends to give protection to the rank and file of the Muslim Congressmen in this province.

Bengal Provincial Congress organisation do[es] practically nothing except issuing statements in the Press. In one word they are not concerned about us at all. We are on the cross fires [sic]. There have been cases in which Congress Muslims have been killed by the Hindu mob in the locality where the cream of the Hindu society lives. Those who are at the helm of affairs of the Congress in the city of Calcutta did not or dared not to move their little fingers to stop this carnage, for they have no sanction behind them, neither have they any organisation in the real sense of the term to support them. I am stating to you the bitter truths. Now I seek your advice in this vital matter. Please let me know how we should conduct ourselves in these awful days and save our lives both from the hands of the Leaguers and also the Hindu mob. Is there any chance of our getting any protection from any quarter? Should we be treated like untouchables by the Congress organisation here?

I desire to add one thing more before I conclude this letter. We rank and file Congressmen have been watching the policy of the Working Committee of the Congress from a long time regarding the politics of our country. Before you were released from jail, Mahatma Gandhi carried on negotiation[s] with Mr Jinnah when his influence was on the wane. After that came the Simla Conference and last but not the least the Cabinet Mission Conference. They called our President Maulana Azad a quisling, fifth columnist, traitor and what not day in and day out, and yet the negotiation continued. Mr Jinnah threatened the whole country with civil war and as a matter of fact, has already started a mad orgy of arson, loot and murder of innocent people. Still you do not cease your infructuous policy of negotiation and appeasement. It is a historical fact that power comes to those who fight and struggle for the liberty of the country but it is a strange phenomena in this benighted land of ours that League is very near to achieving its end by threats, intimidation and bloody riots, and you leaders appear to succumb to it. To me it appears you have not the courage to face the situation as it stands today. I want to quote ... Lala Deshbandhu Chittaranjan Das when he uttered in his agony in Alipur Central Jail in 1921 at the cessation of Civil Disobedience by Mahatmaji on account of the Chouri Choura happenings. The words were these "Hands that shake cannot rule". If you are not invested with the power to face the present situation of the country, pray why have you entered into the so-called National Govt. or the Interim Govt., whatever you may like to call it? We do not know whether you have any real power to administer the country from the centre. It is only a few days that you have joined the Govt., and you have not got your full team yet into it. Our man in the street expects much of you, but you seem to be hesitating and halting in your steps in maintaining peace and order in this vast land of ours. Your policy of negotiation has no end. You appear to be weak in mind and not sure of your strength. I would like to ask you how you expect the League people to work in coalition with you whose declared policy is the achievement of Pakistan. Will you not in the circumstances pull in opposite directions if they join the Interim Government?

You are overwhelmingly a busy man, and I must therefore apologise to you for raising such questions as I have done. My only apologia is this that I consider you as one of my comrades although you occupy a very high position in our national life now. May I expect a reply,—a sharp one on the vital questions raised by me, through a messenger or through a letter? I hope your letters are not censored now secretly, as you happen to occupy the foremost position in the Interim Govt. We still suffer from this disease.

Yours very sincerely,
Ashrafuddin Ahmad Chowdhury.

36. Congress Activities in the United Provinces

Extracts from Weekly Report No. 38, 27 September 1946. CID Records, Government of the United Provinces (1946); Uttar Pradesh State Archives.

... Congressmen have been busy celebrating Gandhi Jayanti week and Dasehra festival. At Agra the Managing Committee have decided not to hold this festival this year owing to communal riots in the city. At almost all their meetings Congressmen have indulged in anti-zamindari propaganda....

37. Village Panchayats in the United Provinces Act as Parallel Courts

Extracts from Weekly Report No. 39, 11 October 1946. CID Records, Government of the United Provinces (1946); Uttar Pradesh State Archives.

... At Aligarh Village Panchayats are reported to have disposed of many cases of heinous crime; in a case of rape a Village Panchayat is said to have fined the accused a hundred rupees and let him off. In Azamgarh, Congressmen are conducting their own enquiry in a case of black-marketing in cloth; they are also recording statements of prosecution witnesses in their efforts to assist an under-trial in a Section 110 case. In Deoria, Panchayats are said to have resorted to the punishment of beating when deciding certain cases. At Partapgarh a constable serving summonses, issued by a competent court, was obstructed by Congressmen, with the result that one witness refused to accept the summons. At a public meeting in Rae Bareilly the audience was told by the President of the District Congress Committee that policemen should not be given anything to sit on when they visit villages....

38. Alleged Communist Violence Against Students' Congress in Pondicherry

Extracts from a letter by Dinkar Sakrikar, General Secretary, All India Students' Congress, to Mridula Sarabhai, General Secretary, Indian National Congress; Bombay, 19 October 1946. File No. 22; All India Congress Committee Papers (1946); Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

... I have received reports of serious disturbances in Pondicherry. The President of our Madras branch informs me that the local Communists have taken resort to violent methods in suppressing our organisation. SC [Students' Congress] workers are being assaulted and stabbed every day. Telegrams and appeals have been sent to Mahatma Gandhi, Pt. Nehru and others. Sri Rangrajan a member of our WC [Working Committee] has proceeded to Pondicherry and a fuller report is awaited. I have to request you to institute your own inquiries and do the needful....

39. Congress Activities in the United Provinces

Extracts from Weekly Report No. 42, 1 November 1946. CID Records, Government of the United Provinces (1946); Uttar Pradesh State Archives.

... At Aligarh, Congressmen are trying to improve the relations between high and low caste Hindus....

... Hargovind Singh, Secy. of a Congress Mandal, advised the audience at Ballia to take revenge against local Muslims for what happened at Noakhali. At Gorakhpur, Congressmen are advocating nonpayment of new taxes imposed on them the Estate authorities. Shibban Lal Saxena has severely criticised the SI [Sub Inspector] Police and a zamindar of Sahjanwa and advised the public not to respect the SI....

40. Congress Demands Withdrawal of League from Interim Government

Extracts from a letter by the Congress Subjects Committee to AICC President; 22 November 1946. File No. G-39; All India Congress Committee Papers (1946); Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

... We shall move the following resolution in the Subjects Committee:

In view of Mr Jinnah's declaration of 21 inst. to the effect that all Muslim League members will not participate in the Constituent Assembly, the Subjects Committee advises Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, leader of the Interim Government, to urge upon the Viceroy that the Muslim League members should simultaneously withdraw from the Interim Government as the declaration of Mr Jinnah is in contravention of the spirit and letter of the British Delegation's statement of May 16....

41. Proceedings of Indian National Congress Session at Meerut

Report of proceedings of Indian National Congress, 54th Session, Meerut, 23–24 November 1946. *Indian Annual Register* (1946); Vol. I, pp. 282–96.

The 54th annual session of the Indian National Congress opened at Meerut on the 23rd November 1946 with Acharya Kripalani in the chair. Delegates and visitors numbering 100,000 according to one estimate, sat in the pandal, while a much larger concourse filled the approaches and pushed and jostled and milled round for vantage points from which to see and cheer the leaders as they entered in procession. Loudspeakers carried the speeches to the gathering outside.

Welcome Address

Chaudhury Raghubir Narain Singh, Chairman of the Reception Committee, welcoming the delegates, said that Meerut, where the first shots in the Mutiny of 1857 were fired, was proud of the honour of playing host to the annual session of the Indian National Congress. The power which had kept us enslaved, he said, was now weakening, but had not lost all strength as was shown by the happenings during Pandit Nehru's tour of the Frontier.

Referring to the disturbances in Noakhali and Bihar, he said that our leaders were trying hard to put an end to them, but the power to incite violence was often greater than the power to check it. The disturbances had spread to Meerut and had forced on us a purely businesslike session. He, however, asserted that the city of Meerut had to share the responsibility for some of the dreadful things done in certain parts of the district. He extended a warm welcome to the delegates and asked their indulgence for any shortcomings.

A resolution of condolences on the leader who died during the last six and a half years was first passed.

Acharya Kripalani's Call to Nation

Acharya Kripalani then delivered his presidential address. The following is the text:

"We are meeting after full six years—years momentous in the history of our own struggle for freedom. During the period, we came twice into open conflict with the British Government. In 1941, we started the Individual Civil Disobedience movement to vindicate the right of every Indian freely to express his opinion about the war in which India was dragged against her will. It succeeded in attaining this limited objective. The second was the all-comprehensive 'Quit India' struggle." Mr Kripalani referred to the release of the leaders in 1945, the abortive conference at Simla, the visit of the Parliamentary delegation, followed by the visit of the Cabinet Mission, the long negotiations at Delhi and Simla, culminating in the historic Statement of May 16 and the formation of the Interim Government in September last by the Congress. "Soon the Viceroy began talks with the League leaders on his own initiative, without the consent of his colleagues in the Cabinet. Such a procedure was not contemplated. The offer made to the Congress was unconditional. Nevertheless, the Congress, always willing and anxious for unity, did not object. Through the Viceroy the Congress and the League resumed negotiations. The result again was failure. However, in the end, the League accepted the Viceroy's invitation to nominate five out of fourteen members in the Interim Government. Thus the League representatives are today in the National Government working as colleagues with our own representatives. It is hoped that facing the same difficulties and solving the same problems, a workable unity will be evolved that will carry us over these troublous times."

Need for Constructive Effort

"I believe," Mr Kripalani said, "that if the Congress had not taken up the challenge of British imperialism in August 1942, we would not be occupying the position we do today. Nor indeed would the Muslim League and other minorities, though some of them may not like to admit the fact. True we have not yet achieved our goal of Purna Swaraj. But our representatives and leaders have broken into the citadel of power. This is not the end of foreign domination, but it is surely the beginning of the end, provided we know how to utilise our opportunities. However, even when we have achieved our goal of complete independence we must not think that our task is done. National liberty is precious indeed. It is the very breath of a nation's life. But however important, it is a negative achievement—a removal of external shackles. If we are wise we will not rest content merely with the removal of external restraints, but will so order our affairs that the freedom we gain is translated into concrete good to our people. This means that our revolutionary zeal, even while it destroys the old order must constantly achieve creative expression in constructive activity.

"This constructive effort should be nothing new for us. Our revolutionary movement, based as it is on non-violence, is unique in history. Usually political revolutions have aimed at the destruction of the old order. All constructive effort to remould the nation's life has been done after the old order was completely destroyed and power captured. This progress has inevitably led not to one but a series of revolutions before things could settle down and constructive effort begun. Not unoften, the progress has led to civil war and ultimately to dictatorship. Both civil war and dictatorship have a tendency to defeat the aims of a revolution. It was so in the French and Russian revolutions. The Congress under Gandhiji's lead has avoided overemphasis on mere destruction or on the capture of power. It has, on the other hand, laid great emphasis on the constructive programme. Now that Congressmen are at the

helm of affairs in many provinces and even at the Centre we have some sort of a National Government, it should not be difficult to intensify our effort and realise the full possibilities of the constructive programme as enunciated by Gandhiji and accepted by the Congress."

Decentralisation of Industry

Reiterating the emphasis placed by the Congress on political democracy and economic equality, Mr Kripalani said: "Economic equality may be of the communist order based on centralised big industry or it may be democratic and based upon a fair degree of decentralisation. If democracy is to survive, it must discover a means of avoiding concentration of economic power in the hands of the ruler or rulers however selected or elected. Even a political democracy can be a dictatorship if there are no spheres of free activity left to the individual. The historical role of the Congress in the economic field has been its bold advocacy of decentralised industry. The Congress appointed in 1939 a Planning Committee under the presidentship of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. This Committee has been at work for several years. It has collected facts and figures. It is time that its labours are utilised. But these cannot be utilised unless the Congress makes up its mind as to what industries are to be centralised and what decentralised. Unless that is done each province will go its own way. I am afraid that already there is a kind of competition even among the Congress provinces in the field of big industry. Each province wants to introduce as many mills and factories as possible. We had thought that the cloth industry was the one most eminently suited for decentralisation. But even here each Provincial Government is vying with the other to set up new cloth mills. Some people believe that in the present state of scarcity of cloth all means of increased production must be utilised. They, however, fail to see that this necessity creates new capitalist vested interests. As a khadi worker I believe that with less capital and less effort and in a shorter time more can be accomplished by a systematic encouragement of the charkha and the handloom than by opening new mills. I have taken the example of the cloth industry. But it is time that we took counsel among ourselves and decided what industries might be worked on centralised and what on decentralised basis."

Proceeding, the President said: "Our agriculture too must largely follow the pattern of decentralised industry. It must chiefly consist of peasant proprietorships, with a provision that no plot shall be subdivided, whether on account of inheritance, debt or any other cause, beyond what would maintain a villager's family. Recently in response to a nonofficial resolution moved in the AICC it was decided by the Working Committee that the Provincial Governments be asked to send to the AICC office their schemes for the abolition of the Zamindari system. The material received should be systematised and placed before the Working Committee for consideration. I hope the direction of the Working Committee in this matter will be speedily given effect to and a body of experts appointed to prepare a comprehensive plan for the elimination of the middleman in our agricultural economy. The food problem which assumed dangerous proportions during the war continues to be our great concern even today. We are still dependent on what foreign countries may choose to dole out to us. This dependence on the foreigner must be eliminated when the most primary needs of existence are concerned."

Congress Must Work for a New Social Order

"The historical evolution of our freedom movement," Mr Kripalani said, "pledged as it is non-violence and the good of the masses, demands a social order free from exploitation, functioning democratically and turned to international cooperation and peace. Such a society will be in consonance with the highest ideals of the age and time we live in. The Congress under Gandhiji's

lead has been working for these objects. Now it must define the objects more clearly and work more consciously towards their realisation and utilise its newly acquired power towards that end."

Calling for national unity at the present critical juncture, Mr Kripalani said: "Today we have some kind of a National Government at the Centre and provinces have their popularly elected Governments. In a short time we shall be assembling to form a new constitution for India. Freedom if not achieved is surely in sight. The British can no longer deny it to us, whatever their intention. If today we miss our goal, the fault shall be ours. It will be due to the mistakes of commission and omission we make at this critical juncture. The greatest strength of British imperialism in India is that it has been possible for it to carry out its nefarious designs through the instrumentality of the Indians themselves. Our tragedy has been our divisions and differences and a tendency to subordinate large national interests to those of caste, creed and party. We give to the smaller units the loyalty that is due to the whole. Herein lies our greatest weakness."

Bane of Communal Differences

"Of all the political virtues, unity is the greatest and the most important, provided this unity is not superimposed by force but is natural and spontaneous. But in India small differences produce unbridgable gulfs. Common points are forgotten, petty disagreements overemphasised. We must, if we have to live and progress as a nation, check this inherent centrifugal tendency. At present the greatest danger to our freedom is the communal differences, specially between the two major communities, the Hindus and the Muslims. The foreigner has taken the fullest advantage of these in the past. Today he finds it his last trump card. He is playing it cleverly and subtly. It is unhistorical, unscientific, unethic and unnatural to think that the Hindus and the Muslims are two nations. Their interests, social, political and economic are identical. Their common points are innumerable. Their differences can be easily counted and are only skin deep. The foreigner cannot distinguish the Hindu from the Muslim except by the accident of dress, and that too only if he is familiar with sartorial differences which change from province to province. India, outside India, is considered one whole. To think of India as divided into two nations, Hindu and Muslim, is retrograde and reactionary. It is dividing what nature and history have united. I have my own grandnephews and nieces in Sind who are Muslims. They love me as well as do my Hindu grandchildren. I cannot imagine that I as a Hindu am an Indian and they as Muslims belong to a different nationality. Once of them, a pretty little bride, wrote to me recently thus: "We offer you our sincerest congratulations on your attaining the highest honour which any Indian can aspire to. May you long adorn the Congress gadi with distinction and service. 'We are, of course, staunch Muslim Leaguers, but we pray that there should be a rapprochement between the Congress and the League.'"

Warning against Anti-national Compromises

"I hold that a Hindu who believes a Muslim to be an alien not only does wrong to his religion but is an enemy of the freedom and progress of India. On the other hand, if a Muslim who is flesh of our flesh, bone of our bone, believes and acts as if he were an alien on Indian soil, he does equal harm to his community and to the nation. We have almost everything in common except religion which should be a personal matter. To fight on questions of faith is the way of a barbarian. I know the present fight between Hindus and Muslims is not a religious fight. It has nothing to do with political or economic issues that concern the masses of both the

communities. The masses act as tools in the hands of the clever and often, unscrupulous politicians. But, whatever the causes, we must recognise the fact of the existing tension and bitterness, and steer our course so as to avoid any major conflict. I have already in my public statements, made after my election, said that the Congress must yield to the demands of the minorities, Muslim or any other, but not at the expense of the good of the nation. Such yielding in the past has largely been responsible for our present troubles. I believe much of our present trouble could have been avoided had we boldly refused to accept the undemocratic and anti-national principle of separate electorates. The communal conflict has today assumed not only a serious but a vicious aspect. It is quite possible that to avoid immediate trouble we may accept principles that cut at the root of nationality and democracy. If we do so, we shall not only be betraying the nation, but ultimately the Muslim and the other communities, I hope our elders will guard themselves and the country against being coerced or cajoled into making any anti-national and undemocratic compromises in the future."

East Bengal and Bihar

"I was recently in East Bengal and Bihar. It would be criminal for me to mince matters. Those who were responsible for the tragedy in East Bengal had given the masses an idea that Pakistan could be established by force—'Larke Lenge Pakistan. Marke Lenge Pakistan'. If once the idea enters into the masses mind that the communal problem can be solved by force, it will be an evil day, not only for India but for all the communities concerned. I am an absolute believer in non-violence. But if the strain that was put on people in East Bengal had been put upon me, I do not know what my reflex action would have been. If I must warn communities against the use of initial violence to settle their differences, I must warn them no less against the use of violence by way of retaliation and reprisal as was the case of Bihar. Two evils do not cancel each other. And these reprisals and retaliations fall on innocent victims, even if the original attack was against those who really had done wrong and deserved punishment.

The Central Government failing to interfere in Bengal, the provinces became virtually independent. The neighbouring province of Bihar under the circumstances was entitled to protest against what happened to the Biharis in Calcutta. The Bihar Government would also have been entitled to warn the Bengal Government against the probable repercussions of what was being perpetrated against the Hindus in East Bengal with what looked almost like the connivance of the Government. The Bihar Government should have made it plain to Bengal that the Hindus in Bihar were profoundly agitated over the fate of their coreligionists in Bengal and that with the best will in the world the Government might not be able to control the situation if the feelings of the people were strained beyond a certain pitch. The Hindus of Bihar should have agitated and insisted upon their Government to take up that position. That would have been the proper and constitutional way. If the Centre fails to make itself responsible for internal security in the provinces, I am clearly of the opinion that popular Governments in the provinces must take up such matters with each other in future. If they do so, they are likely to arrive at a better arrangement than if the communities take the law into their own hands and indulge in reprisals.

Violence is ugly and futile in any case, but the unorganised hysteric violence of the mob is worse than futile. It is fatal to the very cause on whose behalf it is invoked. I am afraid that if the present orgies of provocation and retaliation continue, the Muslim League leadership will soon be unable to control its followers, even if it should decide to. And so might the Congress, through the Congress leadership has done its best to save the people from this hysteria of

violence. If that happens then Indians will be divided into two armed camps of communal fanatics and the Britisher will stand guard over them both with his bayonet. The day of India's freedom will be indefinitely postponed.

If we are to be worthy of freedom we must learn to live together and respect each other's sentiments. Hindu and Muslim minorities are scattered all over this country. No amount of police or military protection can permanently and effectively protect them from the wrath of the majority communities if the latter lose all sense of moral obligation towards them. If no Hindu's life, property and honour are safe in a Muslim-majority area and no Muslim's in a Hindu-majority area, then civilised life becomes an impossibility. Even Mr Jinnah's dream of Pakistan, though it has made the problem what it is, holds out no prospect of its solution, for it leaves the minorities where they are. Did his scheme envisage a total and wholesale transfer of population and the concentration of all the Muslims in India in one compact territory, so that no Hindu, Sikh, Christian or Parsi is left in the Muslim State and no Muslim left anywhere else in India, the scheme might at least have the merit of being a logical solution of the problem however costly, tragic and inhuman it might be to carry it out. Even if the Muslims must have a theocratic State of their own they cannot be allowed to impose it on Hindu, Sikh and other minorities in their territory. These minorities have at least as much right of self-determination as the Muslims claim for themselves in India as a whole. Nor can the rest of India be responsibly expected to harbour large sections of population in its midst who openly repudiate their citizenship in that state. If the Muslim League claims Pakistan on religious and communal grounds, let it face all its implications and not try to eat the cake and yet have it. This is a terrible solution, as detrimental in the long run to the Muslim interests as to the Hindu but it is a logical consequence of the communalism with which the League is infecting its followers and which is making a common civilised life difficult. But in no case must we allow the poison of communal strife further to disintegrate our national and corporate life. In no case must we allow ourselves to be bullied and blackmailed by a section of the population into sacrificing the just rights of the others."

Appeal to the League

"I hope, however, that the leaders of the fanatics among both the communities will have more sense and humanity than to take recourse to desperate and mediaeval remedies. The problem is easy of solution if only we accept the obvious fact that if there are two nations in India, they are the exploited and the exploiting of both or all the communities. The Hindus and Muslims have a common enemy and that is poverty, disease and ignorance. If only we realise what we really are there need be no quarrel between us.

I have laboured this point at length because this is the greater stumbling block in our path to freedom and progress. Even at this late hour I hope now that the Muslim League is in the Central Government and shares responsibility with the Congress the orgies that were enacted in Calcutta, East Bengal, Bihar and to a lesser degree elsewhere will be nightmares of the past. We shall write anew on a clean slate of brotherly love and cooperation as children of a common motherland."

The States' Problem

Turning to the problem of the States, Mr Kripalani said: "Like the communal, the States question is easy of solution, if we think in terms of India and not in terms of section or community. The Princes must realise that India cannot be half free and half slave, and that in a free India they

cannot exist and carry on as they do now. If they only knew their real self-interest, they would instead of relying upon the precarious help of a swiftly fading imperialism, put their trust in the affections of a free, happy and prosperous people. Political India has no objection to their existence if only they would live and act as democratic, constitutional monarchs."

Abolition of Untouchability

Calling for the abolition of untouchability, the President said: "No less menacing to the freedom and progress of our nation is the canker of untouchability. It mainly affects the Hindu community. But it is such an anachronism and so inhuman that its continuance is bound to poison the whole of our national life. The Provincial Governments must penalise all public exhibitions of untouchability. No public place, be it a road, club, a place of recreation or instruction, or a place of eating, should be closed to our Harijan brothers. Also, I think, Provincial Governments can and should legislate that wherever the majority of worshippers in a particular temple desire the same to be opened to the Harijans, it shall be so opened. In every other way the Harijans should be encouraged to take their rightful place of equality with the so-called caste-Hindus. There should be perfect equality. Personally I believe in a classless and casteless society brought about by non-violent means, for violence is bound to create new castes and classes."

Warning against Power Politics

Pointing to the danger of power politics in the country, he said: "In our struggle our competition so far has been in the field of service, suffering and sacrifice. Now that positions of power and patronage are available to us, let us not kick the ladder [ladder] by which we have ascended to these positions. Let every position of trust, power and responsibility be for the sake of service and not a matter of self [self], patronage, pride or self-aggrandisement. And when we are in the high positions, let us not think in terms of creed, caste or family, but in terms of work and ability."

Turning to the Constituent Assembly, the Congress President observed: "We shall soon be meeting in the Constituent Assembly to frame a constitution of free India. It will be a democratic constitution and will be federal in character. We may not, however, forget that, in the administrative as in the economic field, centralisation, more than is absolutely necessary, is inimical to liberty. It is good, therefore, that the provinces in free India shall have the maximum autonomy consistent with external and internal security. But some of our provinces are each as big as a country in Europe. There may be over-centralisation in the administration of the provinces, which too we must avoid. Progressively, we must delegate to the village panchayats judicial powers in petty criminal and civil cases; the local police too might be put under the charge of the panchayat. If we build upon this village unit of self-Government, rehabilitate it to the altered condition of today, we shall be working in consonance with the genius of our people."

Dealing with India's relation with other countries Mr Kripalani said: "We have always stood for international disarmament, peace, cooperation and open diplomacy. We believe in a new world order based upon goodwill and cooperation. We believe that these objects can be achieved by an international organisation consisting of free and equal nations. We believe that so long as imperialism exists, whatever international organisation is devised for peace, will inevitably be turned into an instrument of ambition by powerful and unscrupulous nations. It will not be based upon equality, justice and fairplay; but upon the combined might of a few

dominant nations. There will always be the big Three, Four or Five. That way lies danger. As long as there are dependent nations and peoples, so long will there be conflict and war."

"No Imperialist Ambitions"

"A free India will have in the field of international affiliations, connections more natural and more suited to her geographical position than she has had under foreign domination. We have no past commitments and no imperialist ambitions for the future. We are concerned with achieving and maintaining the freedom of our country so that our nationals at home and abroad may have their rightful opportunity to full and free development, according to their resources and their genius. We have no enemies. We would like to forget even the wrongs that Great Britain had done to us, once she has made amends and withdrawn her yoke from our necks. We would have no quarrel with South Africa if in the insolence of racial pride its white minority did not seek to deprive the Indians domiciled there of their elementary rights of citizenship, after having enticed them from home.

We respect the right of every people to choose the form of Government that suits them best without depriving others of the same right. We watch with equal interest the Russian adventure in Communism, the British experiment in Democratic Socialism, and the American faith in private enterprise. We must not be duped by ideological claptrap into taking sides in international rivalries and thus embroil ourselves in a third world war, in the mistaken belief that we are serving the world. We should have enough scope at home for our reforming zeal without attempting to reform other nations.

Though we must develop and maintain equally friendly relations with all nations, our association with our neighbours in Asia and Australia will naturally be closer. With China and Japan we have long historic and cultural associations. Even today, thanks to Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, who in the fitness of things is our foreign Minister, we have cordial relations with China. We have also cultural bonds with Indonesia and the eastern islands, which we must develop. India and Australia have nothing to lose and much to gain by closer intercourse. Central Asia and the Middle East are other lands with which we have cultural contacts. With Soviet Russia too our relations must be closer. With all that we must keep up the connections we already have with the western democracies."

No Place for Foreign Colonies in India

"There is an aspect of our international relations about which it is necessary, in the interest of peace, that we should make our stand clear. And that is, that though we make no fetish of national sovereignty and are willing to subordinate its rights to the claims of world peace and cooperation on the basis of perfect equality between all peoples we will not tolerate interference with the right of our people to choose their form of Government or violation of the territorial integrity of India. Whether it is the presence of British troops in India against the wishes of our chosen representatives, or foreign-paid propaganda to create dissensions in our ranks or the continued occupation of portions of our soil by the Portuguese and the French on whatever pretensions, it is a violation of those fundamental freedoms of which no nation can be deprived. If the British can quit India as they have unequivocally promised to do, it is ridiculous for the Portuguese authorities to claim that Goa is part of their country thousands of miles away. I congratulate Dr Rammanohar Lohia for having exposed the gross injustice and indignity to which our compatriots are subjected in Goa. The days of empires are over and today when even big and powerful nations are being obliged to give up their empires, it is time that the

small nations, in their own interest, should gracefully withdraw from theirs and thus help to remove the main cause of wars between nations."

Mr Kripalani went on to deal with the Indian issue in South Africa which had now gone before the United Nations and the position of Indians in East Africa. He pledged India's support to our countrymen in South and East Africa.

Pleading for close and friendly relations with India's neighbours, Ceylon and Burma, Mr Kripalani said: "Ceylon and India have been good neighbours all along and the Congress is determined to maintain and develop these relations. Indian nationals in Burma must identify themselves with the people of Burma and mix with them as sugar does with milk. Knit together in a common friendly relationship. India, Burma and Ceylon will be in a position to fulfil their historical mission in the creation of a federation of free Asiatic nations that would constitute a powerful bulwark against imperialism and exploitation, whether of the Western or the Eastern type."

Congress Ministries and the People

Referring next at length to the problems facing the Congress organisation in the new situation the President declared: "The Congress is a democratic organisation seeking to represent and act on behalf of the people of India. It has done this through service, sacrifice and suffering. The first condition of the existence and effective functioning of such an organisation is unity.

This does not mean that there should be no difference of opinion or no groups or parties in the Congress. It only means that the different groups and parties should realise that in an organic unit one cannot be true to a part unless one is true to the whole. The second condition of healthy and effective functioning of the Congress is discipline. This must be self-imposed. We must build such traditions and conventions as would make indiscipline difficult, if not impossible.

In our struggle against foreign imperialism we have learnt and employed certain methods of agitation and struggle for the attainment of our goal of independence. Because these methods have paid us in the past, we are likely to believe that they are of universal application. We imagine that they will serve us also against the democratically established governments which we have now ourselves installed in power. The methods employed in our agitation against the foreign government may not therefore be quite appropriate in the case of our own. Today when we can change our legislators and ministers, direct action should be out of the question. Even in our criticism we must be careful and considerate. Our ministers in the provinces and at the Centre are harassed by so many political and administrative problems that they need our understanding and sympathy. The nation wants too many things done quickly. We have desired freedom so keenly and so long that we have come to believe that its advent will solve all our problems. We are therefore apt to be impatient and to overlook the difficulties our representatives have to face in a government that has no traditions of service and whose officials have always acted as the masters of the people. The machinations of the vested interests, official and unofficial, native and foreign also make the task of a National Government at this initial stage difficult. Our criticism must, therefore, be constructive and sympathetic and never merely destructive. We must give our representatives breathing time to clear the mess that they have inherited. Let nothing be done or said which will be used by our enemies to discredit our representatives in the Government.

But those who are in the Government must also never forget that they are servants of the people not their masters. They must remember that they cannot afford to kick the ladder that

has taken them to their present eminence. Let them therefore, always remain loyal to the Congress and through it to the people of India. From them they derive their strength and to them is their first and foremost responsibility. They must also see that they are not swallowed up by the bureaucratic machine. They must reform and simplify it. They must have less of red-tapism and consistently with their public duty they must be accessible to the people. They must also dispense with much of the paraphernalia of pomp and power that a foreign government thought necessary to keep its prestige. Their prestige is derived from service and voluntary poverty which they embraced before office came their way."

Revision of Congress Constitution

"It is often complained that the constitution of the Congress has broken down. It no longer works smoothly; the organisation has become too big and complex for it. There is therefore a demand for overhauling it. To meet this demand the AICC, has appointed a committee to suggest necessary changes. The committee has met often and made its suggestions. These, if they are approved by the Working Committee and the Subjects Committee, will be placed before you for your adoption. If for any reason it is not possible to adopt the changes immediately, the Constitution Committee has suggested some interim changes which will regulate our elections and eliminate from these, as far as possible corruption, scramble for posts and violence. But we must not forget that external checks cannot be effective, unless we cultivate public virtues. The last war has killed all idealism and made the average citizen cynical. It has introduced black market methods everywhere. These methods are used in Congress elections too. Bribery, fraud, impersonation and sometimes even violence are used to coerce the voter. Ballot boxes are stolen and destroyed. All this is degrading. It is a reflection not only on our public spirit, but on our moral principles. It is strange that we should be non-violent in fighting foreign imperialism but violent in our dealings with each other. This clearly shows that our non-violence is that of the weak and not of the strong. It is better to be strong and violent than to be weak and non-violent."

The Mission of the Congress

"It is our great good fortune that we of this generation have been afforded an opportunity to be the instruments of a noble cause. It is not merely the freedom of people from foreign yoke that we are called upon to strive and work for. Such an opportunity has come to many people in history. Ours is a unique opportunity. It is to win our freedom by non-violent and truthful means and to work for high ends by moral means. Ours is the opportunity to bring about a fusion of different castes and creeds and racial and religious types. Ours is the opportunity to unify what appear to be differing and conflicting cultures. We may not forget that today humanity must find a peaceful solution to its conflicts, social, economic, political, racial and cultural, or perish. There can be no violent solution. Violence has overreached itself. Some other method must be found. India has found the method and tried it to some purpose, under leadership that comes once in many centuries. It is a new method. There have been lapses. But remember, no revolution in history was less costly in the loss of life, property and the dislocation of normal life, and created less hatred and strife than the Indian revolution, which if we are not negligent, is on the verge of success. But whether immediate success crowns our efforts or not let us not forget that we are engaged in a good and great cause. In such a cause there can be no ultimate failure. But if the cause is to succeed, the agents working for it must themselves be good and great. Slavery works neither for goodness nor for greatness. But the darkness of centuries can

be removed the moment the light is brought in. In India the light has been lit. Let us keep it steadily burning, and let us follow its lead, and all shall yet be well with us—*Bande Mataram*.

Proceedings and Resolutions

Pandit Nehru Warns the Services

After the Presidential address, Pandit Nehru moved the first main resolution of the session. It was the one passed by the Subjects Committee giving a retrospect of the events during the past six and half years and appealing for internal unity.

Pandit Nehru spoke with warmth on the movement of 1942—which he described as a year of storm, suffering and sacrifice— and the part played by the official world in dealing with it.

“I can never forget the part played by British as well as Indian officers in that year. I realise their position and am prepared to sympathise with them. But those who were responsible for the atrocities committed on the people must not escape punishment. We can show neither fear nor favour in punishing them.” (Cheers). He called the attention of Provincial Premiers and Ministers to this matter. He wanted the Viceroy to take note of it.

Pandit Nehru disclosed that the Viceroy had once suggested to him not to “oppress” officials. His reply was he had no intention to oppress them, but had also made it clear more than once that he was not prepared to compromise officials guilty of wrongs during 1942, whether they were British or Indians. He recognised we had to depend on officials, but we must also keep them on the right path and not let them degenerate or be demoralised. We must also protect them. They included good and intelligent men.

But the Services were fossilised in their mental outlook. They were wedded to bygone and obsolete methods and refused to move with the times. British officers in particular looked to the Muslim League for sympathy and collaboration. They were in effect members of the Muslim League. Both the League and British Servicemen still lived in the mediaeval age mentally.

“It remains to be seen how long we can function in these circumstances. The experience of the past three or four months has shown us that the conduct and attitude of the officers have not changed.” The British Government in England might be true to their promises but had to depend on their Agents in India and guided by their advice. The British in India talked of quitting India but at the same time plotted to impede our programme.

But they were not the only enemy, “We have enemies in our camp. We must weed our corruption and defeat these enemies in the final struggle for India’s liberation.” (Cheers).

Pandit Pant seconded the resolution in a brief but forceful speech. After paying homage to those who had worked and sacrificed for independence, [he] said that after the ‘Quit India’ resolution, the Congress had increased its strength many times but had still been unable to achieve independence. The only way to it was through unity and organisation. The resolution was passed unanimously.

Sardar Patel on League’s Policy

A stern call to Indians to organise self-defence against hooligans was uttered by Sardar Patel, who made a fighting speech in moving the next resolution ratifying the Working Committee’s and AICC’s decisions leading to the formation of the Interim Government.

Sardar Patel dealt with the circumstances in which the Interim Government was formed and said its formation was made possible by the assurance given during the negotiations and

the Government would have the same status as Dominion Government and would work as a Cabinet with joint responsibility, although it was acknowledged that it would be difficult to amend the Act in order to put this position in a legal and constitutional basis.

Referring to the position of the League, Sardar Patel quoted extensively from the letters of the Viceroy published today, particularly the one dated October 23 in which His Excellency conveyed the assurance given to him by Mr Jinnah that the Muslim League would come into the Interim Government and the Constituent Assembly with the intention of cooperating. The Congress accepted the Cabinet Mission's proposals on the solemn declaration of Prime Minister Attlee that no minority would be allowed to veto progress towards independence. Mr Jinnah as the House knew, rejected the Interim Government proposals at first, but later came in on the plea that Muslim interests demand the League's entry. "Similarly, I know that the League will come into the Constituent Assembly on the same plea."

What was being done today was with the object of getting the Congress out of the Interim Government. "We shall not allow ourselves to be caught in the net. We joined the Government with full and firm determination to remain there. We have no intention of leaving it ourselves. (Cheers). The only way to make us leave it is to dismiss us or to convince us that continuance in it is futile."

It had been stated on behalf of the Muslim League today that they objected to the description of Pandit Nehru as Vice-President of the Cabinet. League spokesmen had earlier stated that the Vice-President had no special position in the Cabinet. "If so, why did the League ask for the appointment of Hindu and Muslim members as Vice-President by rotation? (Laughter). The fact is that in spite of all that the League might say, it is a Cabinet and it is known to the world at large as the Nehru Cabinet or the Congress Cabinet (Cheers). It has been recognised as a Cabinet by British Government."

Recognising it as a Cabinet, people in different provinces asked the question why it did not bestir itself in connect on with the present disturbance in the country. The former Government of India used the full armoury of its weapons against the Congress in 1942, when it passed the 'Quit India' resolution and had not even decided to implement that resolution. But here was a party, whose members had made violent speeches, and which had launched a programme of direct action without the slightest pretension to non-violence. Yet the Government did nothing. The people asked why? It was a legitimate question and in reply to it, he would first point out that 1942 was not 1946 or rather that 1946 was not 1942. Secondly, today the fight was not with the British Government but among ourselves. Thirdly, the British themselves were engaged in a life and death struggle in 1942 and the Government had special and extraordinary powers which had now lapsed.

Bengal Governor's Statement Criticised

Recalling the Bengal Governor's statement that India had attained fifteen-anna Independence and that only one anna still remained, Sardar Patel announced that the fifteen-anna Independence had only given us complete freedom to kill each other. The Governor had witnessed the killing in Calcutta and yet had merely stated that the Ministry had full power to deal with the situation. But the Bengal Ministry had done nothing and the people took the law into their hands. The Interim Government was asked to provide police and military protection. Some leaders from Bengal came to him and asked for intervention. He told them the Centre had no power and that they had the Centre's moral support. He warned them that East Bengal was bound to be the next scene of trouble and he asked them to prepare themselves to face it.

He told them, "If you want independence, you must learn to defend yourselves, and your neighbours and other helpless people. You should not run to the Army or the police for protection.

The question might be asked: "If they were helpless, why did they not resign?" He wanted them to understand that the British Government was on the Muslim League side. The British and the Muslim League were friends in need and now that the British knew they could not possibly stay here longer, they wanted to help their friends, the Muslim League. If only in order to counteract the effect of this alliance, it was necessary for the Congress to stay on in the Government. "We can break this Government at any moment. But we shall break it only after blackening the face of the British everywhere."

Referring to the Calcutta killing Sardar Patel observed that he had hoped that when those who started it had the balance sheet before them, they would realise that bloodshed did not pay. But more bloodshed and other crimes started in East Bengal. He did not accept the theory that it was the work of goondas. It was not the work of goondas but was a game played to achieve political ends. Worse than killing were forcible conversions.

"Even the death of thirty lakhs of people in the Bengal famine did not grieve me so much as these forcible conversions. Death is any day preferable to forcible conversion. But did any Muslim leader raise his voice against these forcible conversions?"

Two or three Muslims among the delegates stood up at this point to object to the statement that no Muslim leaders had protested against forcible conversions.

Sardar Patel said that all the remarks he had made were against Muslim League leaders.

The interrupters suggested that the speaker should mention the Muslim League and not Muslim in general terms.

Sardar Patel went on to refer to Mahatma Gandhi's efforts in East Bengal and said there could, however, be no peace unless those who disturbed the peace suffered and felt the agony.

Transfer of Population

After Bihar, the League was suggesting transference of population. "You are welcome to it. But remember this was what Hitler tried to do. And if you do it the same fate that overtook Hitler will overtake you." Sardar Patel appealed in God's name for a stoppage of the disturbances because the disturbances were not only doing harm to the country but were bringing India's name into disrepute abroad. "Whatever you do, do it by the method of peace and love. You may succeed. But the sword will be met by the sword. (*Cheers*). If you want to get Pakistan by this means, then there will be no peace in India." The only thing for the League to do was to cancel the Bombay resolution and if that was not done, there was no place for the League in the Interim Government.

Sardar Patel gave a warning to the public servants who did not work faithfully and said there would be no alternative but to get rid of them.

The British Government was going away. Even if we fought among ourselves they were going quickly. The only thing was that if we fought they could point the finger of scorn at us and say "you wanted us to quit and you see the result."

Sardar Patel closed with an appeal to people to use violence if necessary in self-defence and not to do violence to others.

Mrs Asaf Ali's Opposition

Mrs Aruna Asaf Ali, who opposed the resolution, was received with great cheering. She declared that after three and a half years of underground activity she had looked forward to a Congress session held to ratify a revolutionary programme and not to ratify a programme of constitutionalism. We should have met today to approve a complete abandonment of the path of compromise. (*Cheers*). She referred to Tilak, Gandhi and other personalities and said that revolutionaries like them had succeeded every time they came into conflict with orthodox Congressmen. Only recently had there been no victory of the revolutionaries.

Pandit Nehru's speech, she said, was a portrayal of the actual position of the Interim National Government. It was really neither national nor a Government and it was likely to cease to be interim. It was not national because, according to Pandit Nehru, there was a King's party in it; it was not a Government because it had failed to deal with Bengal.

She welcomed Sardar Patel's forthright declaration that the sword must be met by the sword. She and others of her way of thinking had never subscribed to non-violence, but if the sword was to be used it must be used against the British.

Opposing Sardar Patel's resolution, Hakim Abdul Jalal Nadvi of the Frontier Province strongly criticised the spirit of Sardar Patel's speech. He said it was Jinnah-like, since it encouraged civil strife in the country. The Sardar had advised people not to depend on Government agency and protect themselves against aggression by others. The speaker said Congressmen were wedded to non-violence and fought the forces of the British by non-violent means. How then could they raise their hands against their own brethren? (*Cheers*). He complained that the Sardar's speech advocated violence and said if Congress proposed to change its creed of non-violence, let it be openly declared. (*More cheers*).

Sardar Patel, replying reiterated his conviction that the sword must be met by the sword. Mahatma Gandhi had said that it was better to use violence than to be a coward. Non-violence, said Sardar Patel, was a weapon which it was beyond the power of ordinary men to use and therefore he urged people to adopt violence in self-defence and only in self-defence or in defence of neighbours. He gave this advice, because there was no Government at the Centre at present. The present Central Government during the transference of power was in a stage of paralysis. (*Laughter*).

As regards revolutionary spirit, Sardar Patel said some people deceived themselves by imagining that they were bringing about revolution. This was like the dog in the fable, which while walking under a heavily loaded cart, imagined that the cart would not move if it stopped. (*Loud laughter*). Revolution could only be brought about by hard organised work. He denied that by being in the Interim Government, they were cooperating with the British Government. The British were quitting and were we cooperating with them if we helped them to pack their belongings? (*Laughter*).

In an appeal to Bengal, Sardar Patel said that the province had been his inspiration since childhood. It had given the lead to the rest of India, but he called upon Bengalis to close their ranks and help themselves and he assured them that the whole of India would then support them.

The resolution was passed.

India's Future Constitution

The Congress passed the last resolution of the day on Acharya Narendra Deo's motion. The resolution declared the Congress stand for an Independent Sovereign Republic on the eve of

the summoning of the Constituent Assembly. Acharya Narendra Deo was supported by Rao Saheb Patwardhan and opposed by Mr Suresh Chandra Misra, and the resolution was adopted unanimously. The House then adjourned.

2nd Day—Meerut—24th November 1946

Indian States' Problem

When the open session of the Congress was resumed this afternoon, Dr Pattabhi Sitaramayya, President, All India States People's Conference, moving the resolution on Indian States, adopted two days earlier by the Subjects Committee, stated that he had seen a confidential document indicating a move to form a Confederation of 562 Indian States in order to negotiate with the future Central Government.

Dr Pattabhi referred to the other scheme for the merger of a number of these States and said that this attempt was in no way in the interests of the people: it was not being made with their consent, but merely in consultation among the Princes themselves. He warned the Princes that this kind of merger would lead us nowhere, but would make the problem more intractable.

Dr Pattabhi declared that the people of the States would never recognise the Negotiating Committee unless their representatives were included in it.

The time had come, he said, when the Congress could no longer ignore the problem of the States, but what our next step should be was a matter which could only be decided after full consideration. Freedom should not come to only one part of the country: the whole of India should get it.

Though the States, in general were still carrying on in their reactionary way, yet, as zamindars who were once reactionary, were now anxious for an equitable settlement, Princes also would before long come to similar reasonable frame of mind.

Mr Balvantrai Mehta, seconding the motion, referred to the move for a Confederation and declared that any such scheme, promoted without the consent of the people, would not succeed. In his view, the only way to fight reaction was to organise the people of the States on the lines of the Congress. Not only the Princes, but the Political Department stood in the way of progress. The Political Department prevented any settlement between the Princes and their people.

Mr Ashok Mehta (Socialist) moved an amendment, previously placed before the Subjects Committee by Mrs Aruna Asaf Ali. It sought to extend unstinted moral support to the peoples of Kashmir, Travancore and other States who had been subjected to repression and had organised movements of resistance.

Mr Ashok Mehta said that the Princes were as much a King's Party as the Muslim League was in the Interim Government. Today, the people of Hyderabad, Kashmir, and other States were ready for their struggle and were waiting for orders from the Congress. He urged the Congress to send out its orders for this purpose.

Mr Achyut Patwardhan supported the amendment and expressed disagreement with Sardar Patel's statement yesterday that the fight remained unfinished, particularly against the Political Department. The problem of the States could not be settled directly with the Princes who were guided by the Political Department.

He complained that Congress leaders were not giving proper advice to the people of [the] States beyond exhorting them to be patient although the Congress had expressed sympathy with faraway Spain. It was imperative, he said, that Congress should categorically declare wholehearted and unstinted support to States' Peoples.

Mr Jwala Prasad moved a further amendment seeking to extend active support of the Congress to the effort of the people of the States to establish Responsible Government as an integral part of a free and independent India.

Pandit Nehru's Reply to Criticisms

Pandit Nehru vigorously refuted the statements made by some of the earlier speakers that the Congress had not given support to the people of the States. He was amazed that there should be anyone who could make such statements. The Praja Mandals and the States People's Conference owed their origin to the interest taken by the Congress. He admitted having advised the people of the Hyderabad State not to launch any struggle in the State.

That was in his capacity as President of the States People's Conference and that advice was given in the light of the present delicate situation in the country as a whole but the people of the States were perfectly at liberty to act upon his advice or reject it. Mr Jwala Prasad withdrew his amendment and Mr Ashok Mehta's amendment was rejected.

The resolution was passed unanimously.

Congress Manifesto

Mr Jai Prakash Narain moved the resolution on the Congress manifesto. He urged the President of the Congress to convene a meeting of the All India Congress Committee soon which should continue for about a week to settle the mandate to be given to Congress representatives in the Constituent Assembly. He urged that members of the AICC and not the Congress members of the Constituent Assembly who were competent to decide the shape of Swaraj in the light of the Congress manifesto. Earlier speakers had said that a section of Congressmen did not approve the Socialist form of Government. But his resolution embodied ideals which were acceptable both to Gandhites and Socialists alike. The Congress election manifesto which was adopted by the resolution aimed *inter alia* at removing the curse of poverty and of raising the standard of living.

Mr N.G. Ranga, seconding the resolution, described it as the culmination of the organic growth of the political ideology and of practice of the Indian National Congress under Mahatma Gandhi's leadership. Many of its features were contained in the Congress election manifesto but he knew from bitter experience how difficult it was to make many of our legislators--like legislators all over the world--to keep election pledges. It should now be the duty of the Congress Working Committee and the Congress President to see that the Congress parties in the various legislatures enforced the manifesto loyally and zealously. The manifesto, said Prof. Ranga, showed that the Congress stood not only for political democracy but also for economic and social democracy.

Mr Mathra Prasad Misra moved an amendment suggesting the adoption of the principles and programme not only of the Election manifesto but also of the August Revolution.

Mr Shankar Rao Deo held that the resolution represented a synthesis of Gandhism and Socialism. Mahatma Gandhi believed in equality in a practical form and unlike other great men who had accepted the ideal of spiritual democracy the Mahatma believed in giving practical shape to the ideal.

Mr Jai Prakash Narain in a brief reply said that whether the resolution recognised any 'ism' or not, it was clear it had brought people of different shades of opinion on the same platform.

Mr Mathra Prasad Misra's amendment was adopted and the resolution as amended was passed.

Rajen Babu's Appeal to Congressmen

Dr Rajendra Prasad moved the resolution on the communal situation. He said the happenings in the country were such as to make us hang our heads down in shame. It was the duty of every Congressman to stop them and to carry the message of harmony to the furthest corner. It was unfortunate that while Indians had exercised self-restraint in carrying on their fight with the foreign Government they should have lost self-control in dealing with their domestic differences. He recognised that when one side preached violence, it became difficult for the other side to defend itself with non-violence. But there could be no excuse for retaliation which brought misery to the innocent. He urged that immediate attention be given to bringing relief to the victims of the riots.

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, seconding the resolution, urged that the Congress should now squarely face up to the communal situation or perish. It was true that communal riots had occurred in the past and to our misfortune had recurred at frequent intervals. Occasional sparks had now started a forest fire, threatening to consume all of us. The Congress had a special responsibility in dealing with the present situation. "If you are a part of the Congress, you do not give up your faith. But whether you are a Hindu or a Muslim, you must share the blame or the credit for whatever happens." The first thing that every Congressman—Hindu and Muslim—should do was to look inwards and [put] to himself the question: "Am I free from bitterness in my mind?"

"Though we feel helpless in the face of the situation, we must remember that the only organisation that can deal with it is the Congress. As a national organisation it constitutes in itself the antidote to the present malady. If the Congress fails to live up to its own ideals and eradicate this communal canker, then it will disintegrate and vanish." The Congress should bear the burden of protecting all. To the Congressmen, it should not matter whether it was a Hindu or a Muslim who was in danger. We should remember that the Congress insisted on having a Muslim in the Cabinet even at the sacrifice of a Hindu seat, in order to give up to its ideal of a national, non-communal organisation. If Congressmen in East Bengal had stood fast by their true ideals, as they should have done, the tragedy there would not have occurred, as it did. In Bihar, wherever Congressmen worked for the restoration of peace, the disturbances subsided. He had himself heard Muslims express surprise at the suddenness with which the trouble stopped in parts of Bihar as soon as Congressmen exerted their influence.

Pandit Nehru on Bihar Incidents

Supporting the resolution, Pandit Nehru referred to a note which he had received yesterday in the Congress session from a delegate holding Pandit Nehru responsible for thousands of Hindu lives lost in Bihar as a result of alleged air bombing. Pandit Nehru categorically denied reports of bombing in Bihar during the disturbances and described the circumstances under which about 24 men of a Madras Regiment came to a clash on half a dozen occasions with a crowd of 2500 Hindus who were involved in a pitched battle with 1200 Muslims in a place called Nagarnosa. The Regiment was entrusted with the task of evacuating 1200 Muslims to a place of safety. According to Army sources, about forty people were killed but unofficial sources estimated the death toll between fifty and sixty. His enquiry revealed that in the communal clashes at Nagarnosa about 25 Muslims and between ten and fifteen Hindus were killed in three days' clashes. He was shocked at the exaggerated figures of casualties in Bihar circulated by interested parties.

Criticism of League Policy

Pandit Nehru traced the genesis of the communal trouble in the country and the deterioration that had occurred in the last ten years. He said that the Muslim League adopted Fascist tactics. Their strategy was based on the Hitlerian technique and had many things in common with Hitler's methods. Muslim League leaders like Hitler indulged in a hymn of hatred and violence. The League had no constructive or economic programme for the country or for the Muslim masses. The League had never clarified their position because its leaders had always shelved discussion of questions which might falsify their claims to represent all sections of the Muslim population. Pandit Nehru said a prominent member of the League Council told him that he once asked Mr Jinnah to place the League's constructive programme before the Muslim masses, but Mr Jinnah replied that any such programme would lead to differences and disruption in the Muslim League ranks. Hatred of Hindus was a uniting force. Mr Jinnah said: "The programme of the League was to preach hatred against the Congress and Hindus."

Congress Will Not Shirk its Responsibility

Pandit Nehru went out "I am not afraid of bloodshed. The present civil strife in the country has no doubt moved me, but it has to be faced with a brave heart. I hope the situation will improve. It is true that incidents in one part of the country have repercussion in other parts. Congress has faced many a danger in the past and will not shirk its responsibility in a crisis like this even though some of us may have to lose our lives."

Pandit Nehru declared that the Fascist policy of the League was giving birth to a rival fascism which he termed 'Hindu fascism'. All types of fascism exploited the name of religion and his fear was that the growing Hindu fascism possessed all the dangerous potentialities of Muslim League fascism. Both were the enemies of the unity and progress of India. Congress, Pandit Nehru said, had liquidated British fascism and it was his conviction that it would similarly deal with the two-pronged Indian fascism which threatened to wipe out our culture and civilisation.

Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, supporting the resolution, said that whatever wrongs were done either by Hindus or Muslims were entered in Congress account. In fact, however, the Congress could not know or foresee every disturbance, particularly when, as at the time of the recent disturbances, Congressmen were busy with other affairs. In his view, communal organisations in the country which carried on poisonous propaganda were responsible for the present situation. But such poisonous propaganda did its work because Congressmen were not alert enough to counteract it. Unfortunately, there were only a few Muslims in the Congress and therefore the Congress could not reach the Muslim masses. If we had the leaders to go to the Muslim masses with the message of peace and love and goodwill trouble would not have occurred. Nevertheless, the Congress should win over all those who had turned away from it. We should prevent the drift towards Fascism, which the Fascism of the Muslim League with its emphasis on the philosophy of hatred and violence had, according to Pandit Nehru, set in motion among other sections of the people. The Congress had taken the responsibility of achieving independence. It must win back those who had gone astray. He was sure it could succeed.

Position in NWFP

Referring to his Province he said that it was by non-violence that it had been saved. If there was one spark of violence in that province from the side of the Khudai Khidmatgar or the

Congress, he did not know what would have happened. The British Government was bent upon creating mischief and had worked hard to create mischief. It had backed the League and invited it to carry on propaganda among the tribesmen, while Congressmen were forbidden from entering the area. He requested the Interim Government to give them permission to contact the tribesmen and counteract this poisonous propaganda. The Congress Ministry in the Province had responsibility without power. The Premier of the Province had arranged for the visits of the Vice-President of the Interim Government and also its President (the Viceroy) and the difference in the reception given to them demonstrated the truth of his statement about responsibility without power.

A series of amendments were ruled out or rejected and the resolution was passed.

The last resolution of the session namely, one on amendments to the Constitution was put from the Chair and adopted.

Greetings to Indonesia

The session adopted three resolutions put from the Chair by Acharya Kripalani, one on South Africa, the second on East Africa, and the third conveying greetings to Indonesia. These had been adopted by the Subject Committee on Thursday.

In his concluding speech, Acharya Kripalani again made a fervent appeal for communal unity. The Congress session then terminated.

42. Congress Activities in the United Provinces

Extracts from Weekly Report No. 46, 29 November 1946. CID Records, Government of the United Provinces (1946); Uttar Pradesh State Archives.

... In the few districts where they have been active Congressmen have tried to restore communal harmony....

43. Dissension in Bengal Congress

Extracts from a letter by Jogesh Chandra Chakraborty, President, Mymensingh District Congress Committee, Bengal, to the General Secretary, All India Congress Committee, Allahabad; Mymensingh, 2 December 1946. File No. G-31; All India Congress Committee Papers (1946); Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

Mymensingh, 2-12-46.

Dear Friend,

In a quite unforeseen and unwarranted manner we have been confronted with an unfortunate situation arising out of the visit of Sj. Sarat Chandra Bose, a member of the Congress Working Committee, to this town on the 29th November, 1946....

At the public meeting in the Bepin Park in the evening the President of the DCC [District Congress Committee], who was presiding over that meeting, at the very outset addressed some words of welcome to Mr Bose and others on behalf of the Congress and the citizens. Naturally the President expressed his eagerness to have from Mr Bose a fitting and enlightening exposition of the Congress ideal and programme, to which Mr Bose's response was not only disappointing but revolting. After addresses of welcome on behalf of the forward Bloc and its satellite institutions were presented, the President of the meeting (the President of the DCC)

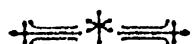
requested Mr S.C. Bose to speak. Mr Bose instead of responding to that request and without any reference to the President of the meeting asked Mr Debnath Das to speak, who at once rose to obey his master's command, quite ignoring the President of the meeting. Mr Das spoke extolling a peculiar creature styled 'Subashbad' and stating that things like 'Gandhibad' and other 'Bads' were things of the past. After him Mr S.C. Bose instructed Mr Satya Ranjan Bakshi to speak, which he at once did. In a clearly arbitrary, authoritarian and mischievous manner, Mr Bose took upon himself the charge of conducting the affairs of the meeting thus ignoring and pushing the duly elected president of the meeting to the background and thereby throwing the common canons of propriety and decorum to the four winds. At last Mr Bose rose to speak. It is not possible to report the whole speech here. Following are the salient points. The keynote of his speech was anti-Congress, anti-Congress High Command and anti-BPCC and pro-Forward Bloc and pro-disruption. The practical effect of the speech is sure to prove damaging to the Congress cause.

In course of his whole speech he never made any reference to the local Congress and Congress Volunteer Corps. Clearly in his estimate they deserved no notice or mention. All his references related to and all his words of praise, commendations, gratefulness were showered upon the Forward Bloc and the Forward Bloc Volunteers as represented by S.J. Jyotish Chandra Joarder.... In a defeatist and mischievous vein he declared that the Congress, not only in Bengal but in other provinces too, has become a devitalised and almost dead organisation no longer providing any inspirations to the people; ... Prominent Congress leaders of the High Command were waxing eloquent about their preaching against Fascism but they were afraid of speaking against Imperialism lest it might bring them suffering at the hands of the Administration ... the youths must revolt against the present coterie rule of the BPCC; BPCC must be purged of present factious elements. New revolutionary BPCC must be built ... he then called upon the youths to form volunteer corps and proceed to work on an independent line choosing one man as their leader, who was to be followed blindly, no matter what the Congress might or might not do. Netaji's ideal was the ideal to be followed. While speaking on untouchability he designedly and irrelevantly sought to make out that Swami Vivekananda, and not Mahatma Gandhi, was the originator of the anti-untouchability movement. It seemed that by dragging in the hallowed name of the great saint Vivekananda he tried to eclipse the abiding contributions of Mahatma Gandhi towards removing that curse.... The impression his speech has left in our minds is that he is now desperately trying to build a coterie inside the Congress under his leadership. We understand that he proposes to come to Mymensingh again very soon to complete the task he has set about.

At the end of the public meeting he was invited to go to the Congress office to meet the male and female workers of all political groups. He was informed of this item of his programme in due time. But he flatly refused to go to the Congress Bhawan for reasons best known to him....

... Really the local Congress has every reason to feel hurt and insulted at the hands of Mr Bose, at almost every step....

... Clearly Mr Bose is now out to form a coterie of his own inside the Congress and to make every effort to bring the Congress lead and leadership into disrepute. He is evidently exploiting his position as a Congress Working Committee member to break the Congress and to further his obnoxious personal ends....



2.iv SOCIALISTS AND OTHER LEFT GROUPS WITHIN CONGRESS

1. Congress Socialist Party for Revolutionary Path to Freedom

Extracts from a note from D.P. Joshi of Congress Socialist Party, to Jayaprakash Narayan; 3 March 1946. No name of place is mentioned on the note. File No. 38; Jayaprakash Narayan Papers (1946); Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

... Subjectively we are very powerful and can fully appropriate the Congress. The Congress organisation is a different entity. Its strength lies in the money of capitalists, profiteers and black marketeers.... As a fighting organisation, the Congress organisation is a bogus affair. Thus the real race is in the field of building up an efficient organisation. Those who build up the organisation will carry through the historical tasks. We need not quarrel with anybody and at the same time we need not be afraid of any organisation or individual. Let us act....

P.S. These introductory remarks were put down before what I should call the February Revolution in Bombay. It is an event greater than any during the August Revolution which is great only because it was countrywide. The day the country adopts the Bombay model, a revolution will take place in India which will shake the world because it will be greater in intensity and magnitude than the Russian Revolution. The Bombay Revolution is a warning to us all—either guide and control the social forces and make a socialist revolution or be damned with your cowardice and hypocrisy.

D.P. Joshi.

2. Aruna Asaf Ali for Boycott of British Goods

Extracts from a news report, 'Revolutionary India won't buy British'. *Bombay Chronicle*, 5 March 1946.

Calcutta, March 4. Mrs Aruna Asaf Ali reiterated her stand with regard to the boycott of British goods in India at students' meeting in the Calcutta University this afternoon and asked the students to fulfil the programme of boycott within three months.

She described all fallacious the argument that boycott of British goods was not feasible immediately, because there was shortage of consumer goods, and said that Revolutionary India would not buy British goods even if there was a real shortage. British export policy was about to overwhelm India's markets with British goods. As a remedy for this, she suggested speedy improvement of village industries and rural reconstruction, which, she regretted, was not being seriously studied by the leaders of the country....

3. Congress Socialists' Attitude Towards Cabinet Mission

Extracts from an article, 'Declare freedom here and now'. *Free Press Journal*, 8 March 1946.

All this talk of British sincerity and good intentions becomes meaningless when absolute silence is maintained on the question of an "unequivocal declaration of India's independence." Hedging with terms like constitution-making body (which lacks the element of sovereignty) will not help. The declaration will leave the problems of the country to be tackled by its people, for

which they have, after all, a right. And no foreigner will be allowed to have any hand in drawing up the constitution. This article examines these aspects and asserts that India must be left to Indians to make of it what they will.

The Indian sky is lit up with flames of revolt. Hardly a day passes when Indians, somewhere or other, do not register a clash with the unwanted and obnoxious alien administration. Hunger for freedom overshadows all other hungers in this hungry land. Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, the Congress President, has given words to the urgent mood of our people, when he declared, "Today the issue has become simplified and concentrated to the one supreme question of immediate realization of independence." The accent is on both the words, immediate and independence....

No useful purpose will be served by the Delegation's interference in the setting up of the constitution-making body....

The course of action that British Government propose to follow, after the elections to the Provincial Legislatures are over, is fundamentally different from the one sought by the Congress.

The crux of the Congress demand is "unequivocal declaration of India's independence." The Government plan does not envisage such an announcement. It is not accidental that the Government insist on using the term "constitution-making body," while the Congress presses into currency "Constituent Assembly". The first will lack the element of sovereignty. It is, therefore, surprising to find Maulana Azad saying, "If the British Government fail to honour the September Declaration, in letter and in spirit, the Congress will consider the necessary steps for a final and decisive struggle."

The September Declaration is an inadequate, nay an untrue expression of the Nation's Will. Its implementing does not mean independence. This confusion in the Congress position needs to be removed if unity is to be maintained in its ranks. The September Declaration contains not a word about India's independence; the Congress can never be a party to an interim arrangement that is not accompanied by such an unequivocal declaration. If the British Big Three come to India without a declaration of Indian independence, they must be greeted with a nationwide boycott. India's independence is not a matter of discussion. It is a prelude to any negotiation....

The last meeting of the AICC decided to contest elections to the Central and Provincial Legislatures. The question of office-acceptance was not then discussed. It would have been in keeping with the democratic traditions of the Congress, and a lot of confusion and loose thinking would have been avoided, if the strategy of freedom had been freely and fully discussed in the Nation's highest forum.

The ministries' main job must be not to run the administration, but to forge a popular authority that will challenge and replace the British 'raj'.

The ministers must forthwith restore civil liberties to our long suffering people and make reparations wherever possible, all political prisoners must be released, restrictive laws must be repealed, fines and confiscated property should be returned and all warrants against politicals should be withdrawn. The liberties, in Gandhiji's words, are the ozone of public life. For the health of our nation, we hope, the ozone will flow unstinted under popular government.

Before embarking on ambitious programmes of reconstruction, the ministers must make the people the source of all initiative and authority. The bureaucracy's stranglehold on the administration has to be smashed once and for ever. The bias of the popular governments must ceaselessly be anti-bureaucracy. Action must be taken against officials guilty of corruption and atrocities against our people during the grim years of the war and the revolution. The

ministers will succeed in switching over the allegiance of the administrative personnel from the British raj to the People's Authority to the extent they show firmness towards the Guilty Men of India.

The Government servants must be made to feel that the ministers have come to stay, and that it is to their advantage to side with the ministers, and against the Governor, in the event of a conflict between them....

4. Forward Bloc Strategy in the Freedom Struggle

Extracts from an open letter by R.S. Ruikar, President, Forward Bloc, to Maulana A.K. Azad, President, Indian National Congress, published in the press on 11 March 1946. *Free Press Journal*, 11 March 1946.

"The struggle for freedom initiated by the Congress in August 1942 has now permeated the masses and it cannot be stopped unless India achieves complete independence. Till that time the Indian masses will march forward with the slogan[s] of "Jai Hind" and "Delhi Chalo". If there is to be a cease-fire order from the side of the people, a corresponding truce should be called by the forces of repression as well. But incidents in Bombay, Madras, Calcutta and Delhi do not speak of Britain's sincerity and in the context of acceptance by the Congress is not calculated to shorten the struggle." This is the view held by members of the All India Forward Bloc who recently met at an informal conference in Jubbulpore.

President of the Forward Bloc, in the course of an open letter to the Congress President, pleads with him for a better appreciation of the role of the Bloc in the freedom struggle and hopes that the Congress will not deviate from its revolutionary programme.

Revered Rashtrapathi,

In view of the fact that the Working Committee of the All India Congress Committee is meeting at Bombay on the 12th of March 1946 to consider the political situation in the country, I venture to address this open letter to you for your kind consideration and that of the Working Committee....

Recently, we in the All India Forward Bloc [A.I.F.], in spite of the ban, met informally at Jubbulpore and discussed the present political situation in the country....

We are emphatically of opinion that Office acceptance under the present Constitution, whether at the Centre or in the Provinces, is totally opposed to the "Quit India" Resolution passed by the AICC, in August 1942. Congress has fought the present elections, both at the Centre and in the Provinces, on the "Quit India" Resolution, and we strongly feel that having fought elections on the "Quit India" Resolution, with the slogans of "Jai Hind" and "Delhi Chalo", now to accept offices, under the direction and guidance of alien Provincial Governors and an alien Viceroy, is not only against the letter and spirit of the "Quit India" Resolution, but in effect will amount to carrying on the King's Government under the aegis of the Union Jack....

We are assured by Mahatma Gandhi that we should not disbelieve British declarations. You have also assured us that transfer of power from foreign to Indian hands is now only a matter of time.... But we cannot but frankly tell you that we in the Forward Bloc (and there are thousands in the Congress and in the country who agree with us) are unable to share your faith and optimism or that of Mahatma Gandhi.

Moreover, the bloodbaths that British Imperialism is enacting almost every day, at Bombay, Calcutta, Madras and Delhi, are hardly the signs that the British Delegation is not coming to

deceive a Great Nation. With hundreds of political detenus like Satya Ranjan Bakshi, Mrs Lila Roy and Jai Prakash Narain in detention camps, with thousands of our INA officers, and soldiers still under custody, with bans on the AIF and the CSP [Congress Socialist Party] and the Kisan Sabhas and the Red Army still continuing, and with Maganlal Bagdi and Ashti and Chimur prisoners still undergoing their long terms of imprisonment it is well-nigh impossible to believe that the British Cabinet Delegation is coming to India with the object of transferring real power to India.

The British Government is still committed to the old Cripps' Formula and its subsequent elucidation by Lord Wavell in 1945. There has been no clear and unequivocal declaration by British Government that it is prepared to accept our national demand as formulated in the famous "Quit India" Resolution. Under these circumstances, any negotiations carried on by the Congress with the British Delegation, would either be a waste of time or may result in whittling down of our national demand, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru has recently stated that "Congress is not prepared to withdraw even an inch from its stand and its demand for complete independence will hold the field at all costs." If what Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru has stated is the real policy of the Congress even today, then I fail to understand why Congress should agree to carry on negotiations with British Cabinet Delegation, before an unequivocal and clear declaration agreeing to grant complete independence in terms of "Quit India" Resolution is made by the British Government....

As an aftermath of the great August Revolution and also as a result of the last Great World War, a new spirit is abroad in the country. The R.I.N. strike at Bombay is the most pointed and glorious example of the new spirit of freedom and revolt which is pulsating through the veins of young India. Strikes, hartals and demonstrations are part and parcel of the same new spirit and urge for freedom of the Indian masses.... If there is to be a 'cease-fire' order, as it seems you have now promulgated in your recent statement issued from Lahore, that there would be no strikes, hartals and defiance of Temporary Authority of the day, then there should be 'cease-fire' order also on the part of the British Government....

In politics, there is no room for simplicity and credulity. Moreover, we cannot forget the lesson of the August Movement in 1942. While Mahatma Gandhi and our revered Congress leaders were thinking in terms of negotiation and conciliation, British Imperialism had made all arrangements for suppressing our movement. We were caught napping in August 1942. Let us not be caught napping again in 1946.

The All India Forward Bloc will function as the Revolutionary Left Wing Socialist Party, functioning within the Indian National Congress. We wholeheartedly agree with the last words of Netaji that "the Congress is the bone of our bones and the flesh of our flesh." We desire to function as a party within the Congress as Netaji wanted us to function when the All India Forward Bloc was formed in 1939 and in the spirit of his last message, I will feel highly obliged, if you and the Working Committee of the Indian National Congress authoritatively clarify the attitude of the Congress towards the All India Forward Bloc and the CSP and other parties working within the Congress.

I am, however, sending a copy of this open letter to you personally and to Mahatma Gandhi, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel and other members of the Working Committee and to Mr Sarat Chandra Bose....

Jai Hind.

5. Congress Socialist Party Policy

News report, 'Congress cannot ignore new forces in it'. *Free Press Journal*, 9 April 1946.

Bombay, Monday. The first authoritative exposition of the policy of the Congress Socialist Party, which is still under ban, was made at a press conference this morning by Mr Achyut Patwardhan, who along with Jai Prakash Narain and Ram Manohar Lohia forms the triumvirate of the CSP, which after the 1942 movement has been the target of considerable criticism by orthodox Congressmen.

"The new forces which have come into the Congress must be recognised," said Achyut Patwardhan. "The question of resistance forces are peculiar to our times and they have appeared in all occupied countries. The conflicts that arise out of these forces are real and cannot be minimised.

"These forces are bitter and rightly so. They will not reduce even an iota of their bitterness and they will see to it that their bitterness will be taken political notice of."

Mr Achyut Patwardhan started by giving the background history of the resistance movement. He said, "A certain amount of speculation exists about what are known as the resistance forces and their place in the political life of the country after their emergence from all restrictions and repression.

"In a sense the problem is not peculiar to India. Similar forces grew up in France, Belgium and other occupied countries. They grew up in defiance of the occupation forces.

"So too in India. These problems are peculiar to our times and the conflicts that arise out of them are great and cannot be minimised.

"These resistance forces are bitter and rightly so and not an ounce of that bitterness can be forgotten and they will see to it that their bitterness will be taken political notice of.

No Personal Malice

"It is not bitterness of a personal type against any particular Congress leader. Most of us have grown in the Congress and are proud of that body. It is the largest political organisation in the world. Gandhi and Nehru have shaped the Congress and we too have been shaped by them. We have no necessity to protest that we are loyal to the Congress.

"There are certain relationships that cannot be flouted. I tell you the strength that you see in the Congress is the direct reflection of Gandhiji and Nehru. Sardar Patel is also one of the strong men of the Congress. He is the only man who can command and control a vast parliamentary machinery.

"If the so-called Leftist forces, therefore, for one reason or other find themselves at loggerheads with him, it is not due to any lack of acknowledgement of his leadership. It is absurd to say that the Congress can live without the Sardar.

"Granting this, I have not the slightest hesitation in picking up a controversy with him and a controversy with him should not be taken as an effort to embarrass him. It is unjust both to him and to us.

"Our cooperation will always express itself in the form of opposition. We are the scavenger cells of the bloodstream of the Congress."

No Outlawing Please

Mr Patwardhan went on to say that whatever differences were expressed should not be understood as aimed at the disintegration of the Congress. But he demanded recognition for

the new forces that had entered the Congress. They had to be kept in the Congress at all costs. These new forces have not yet been shaped [by] the Congress traditions.

"We in the Congress represent a tendency. We will not seek to apologise or justify the weaknesses of the Congress, but we will certainly fight them."

Ministries

When questioned about his attitude towards the ministries, he said that he viewed them as a day-to-day test for forging ahead the cause of freedom.

"It was not only a question of the forces of freedom embarrassing the Ministries, but also of the latter embarrassing the freedom forces." They would be faced on the one hand with reflecting the will of the people and on the other of dealing with a bureaucratic machinery. These problems will put a strain on both the Congress Organisation and the Ministers.

Mr Patwardhan endorsed the call of Mrs Aruna Asaf Ali for the boycott of British goods. Many times it was said, he pointed out, that the Socialists were waiting for a fight with the capitalists. Their approach to the problem as Congressmen was national.

"That section of Indian capitalists who are in alliances with the British are perpetuating the slave-relationship. They are the fifth column of a new invasion.

"The British goods are only a new form of invasion. I would face a famine of goods to find out what the country's real industrial needs are. If we have braved the Bengal famine, we can certainly brave the boycott of British goods. Boycott, Swadeshi and Village Industries are the Combative, Constructive and Political aspects of one single object. The structure of industry must be such as to increase the productivity where the people are and to give employment to the largest number of people."

Expatriating on the ethics of violence and non-violence, Mr Patwardhan said that no man could decide how he was going to fight in what he termed a biological struggle for existence. There were certain things necessary to be done to make the country free. They simply had to be done despite the British 'fatwah' against them.

"We had to prevent the British from preventing us from doing what we wanted to do. Violence or non-violence, it was certainly not the right of the British or for [that] matter of anybody to question our methods.

"We cannot allow our activities to be limited in such a manner as to obtain a permit from the British before embarking on them. I decide for myself what is good for my country's freedom and I do it. It is a question of wits against wits. What we wish to do should be decided pragmatically and democratically."

"There are situations" he continued "when the choice is between inaction and action somehow. There is a situation in which there is a will to be non-violent and between that will and its expression there is a hiatus. We don't mean, we just act."

Congress and the Left

The question of the left-wing forces within the Congress, was for the consideration of the High Command he said. It is to be seen how they approach the problem of the new resistance forces. In every struggle from 1920 onwards Gandhiji has been the greatest recruiting agent for the Congress and he has always enrolled the flower of the nation.

"We will not allow these new forces to remain at a loose end. We will not allow them to go outside the Congress. The Communist Party with its disgusting opportunism will only fool these well-meaning people."

He was of the opinion that all opposition forces should remain within the Congress and work to change it, in the final analysis, he said, our policy will be dictated by the decision of the Congress Leaders.

A Canard Exploded

"There is no such thing as international socialism in the world today," declared the Socialist leader "and I have no faith in it."

"There are Russian socialists but they are trying to expand their influence at the cost of subject nations. In Britain there is a gang of socialists in power today who are preventing us from liquidating the British Capitalist in India. Indian socialists therefore cannot be taken in by this glib talk of international socialism. We subject peoples of the world have got our own conception of socialism. In this I include Burma, Indonesia and the Middle East. The west has been played out. We will not have it whether the west means Russia or England. If this robust nationalism is called racialism I am not afraid of it."

Cabinet Mission

Referring to the Cabinet delegations talks, he said, that they were taking place in a very unreal atmosphere. "The question of negotiations can only arise when there is a victor-vanquished relationship. No such clearcut relationship has been established in the case of India. It will not take India a step further. It leaves the question mark where it was."

When told about the one leader, one party and one programme scheme that was being worked out for the Congress, he said, the Congress is not Fascist and he did not believe that anyone could persuade the Congress to become fascist.

Winding up, Mr Achyut Patwardhan made a bitter attack on the Communists. He called them the stooges of British Imperialism.

"They are not Indians. They are suspect. Unless they make abject recantation of whatever they have done there is no salvation for them." People did not realise how critical the present times were. The shift from war to peace was fraught with grave unrest and upheavals. Unless Congressmen act, the Communists will stage a comeback. The judgment of history will then condemn the inaction of Congressmen.

6. Jayaprakash Narayan in a Press Interview

Extracts from a news report, 'Another struggle, if negotiations fail, says J.P. Narain'.
Hindustan Times, 16 April 1946.

"If the present negotiations with the Cabinet Mission break down, another struggle cannot be avoided," said Mr Jai Prakash Narain, Congress Socialist leader, to an Associated Press of India correspondent on Monday. "I would take all steps to be fully prepared this time," he added.

Asked if independence could be achieved through negotiations and constitutional means, Mr Jai Prakash Narain said: "The talks with the Cabinet Mission are not the result of goodwill on the part of British Labour Government. It is the result of the greatest national upheaval since 1857 and also of outside pressure and the world situation."

Replying to another question, Mr Jai Prakash Narain said: "We are on the stage of formulating our party. The Congress Socialist Party is part of the Congress. We must take stock of the present political situation and then formulate our plans."

About the Communist Party Mr Jai Prakash Narain said: "I consider the Communists to be Russian fifth columnists and as such a perpetual danger to the country irrespective of what policy they may be following at a particular moment." ...

7. Nana Patil Addresses a Congress Socialist Party Rally in Bombay

Extracts from a news report, 'British must quit or we'll kick them out'. *Free Press Journal* 27 May 1946.

Bombay, Sunday. Bombay gave a tremendous welcome to the underground hero Shri Nana Patil when he arrived here this morning. Speaking at a meeting at Shivaji Park in the evening Shri Nana Patil said that real freedom would have been achieved "only when Balasaheb Kher sits in the Governor's chair and Pandit Jawaharlal occupies the Viceregal Lodge. Speaking before Shri Patil, Shri Ramanand Swamiji said that if the British did not quit in time they would have to be kicked out with[out] much ado.

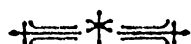
All Bombay seemed to wend its way to the historic Shivaji Park at Dadar to hear that arch revolutionary from Satara, Shri Nana Patil speak his mind. Famous all over India as the director of the terrible Patri Sarkar which wrought terror into the hearts of informers and traitors to the people's cause, plain, powerfully-built and ascetic-looking Nana Patil, the man who shook the Governor's Raj to its very foundations during those momentous days of 1942-43, addressed a mammoth meeting today at 7 p.m. delivering an impassioned speech for nearly thirty minutes. Achyut Patwardhan presided.

Seated on the gaily decorated and highly elevated rostrum were all the leaders of the underground movement. Plainly dressed Aruna Asaf Ali, bespectacled Dr Ram Manohar Lohia, inspirer of the Satara heroes, Shri Ramanand Swami and [a] host of peasant leaders, young and old, who defied death and imprisonment to carry on the behests of the Patri Sarkar for nearly three years were all present.

Also present were Minister Tapase and Parliamentary Secretary Yeshwant Chavan. While down below the rostrum stood at attention Lt Rama C. Mehta of the Rani of Jhansi Regiment in full military uniform.

Labour's Welcome

Since early morning, the Labour area in Parel, Byculla and Mazagaon seemed feverishly astir. Procession after procession, men in ragged groups marching with giant tricolours in their hands, made their way to Bori Bunder to welcome the August Hero who had so stirred their simple peasant hearts. Here was a simple villager like themselves, who had roused their revolutionary ardour and had defied the armed might of British Raj and they wanted to pay their tribute to him. No wonder that more than two lakhs of people, most of them from the same station in life as the Patil himself, congregated at Dadar to accord a grand ovation to him. Never was a greater hand given to any leader, provincial or all-India....



8. British Labour Party Invites Contact with Congress Socialist Party

Extracts from copy of a letter by Jayaprakash Narayan to A.E. Porter, Secretary, Home Department, Government of India; 28 May 1946. File No. 7; Jayaprakash Narayan Papers (1946); Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

28th May, 1946.

Sir,

The British Labour Party has very kindly invited the Congress Socialist Party to send some of its members over to Britain as its representatives to establish contact with the British Labour movement. The Party has accepted this invitation with pleasure and has decided to send Dr Rammanohar Lohia, Mrs Purnima Banerji and Mr Asoka Mehta as its representatives to Britain. Applications for passports are being made to the Provincial Governments.

I am writing to request you to be good enough to see that these friends are able to secure priority in the matter of air passage, and that the matter of passport[s] is also expedited if any difficulty should arise....

Yours sincerely,
J.P.

9. Congress Socialist Party Activities in the United Provinces

Extracts from Weekly Report No. 23, 7 June 1946. CID Records, Government of the United Provinces (1946); Uttar Pradesh State Archives.

... In the Fyzabad district 'Lathi Day' was observed at some places when the speakers exhorted the audience to "kill or be killed" in the next struggle. Similar exhortation was made at Gorakhpur meeting and it was urged that police stations and post offices be captured when the next movement starts....

10. Forward Bloc Activities in the United Provinces

Extracts from Weekly Report No. 27, 5 July 1946. CID Records, Government of the United Provinces (1946); Uttar Pradesh State Archives.

... In Deoria, Shibban Lal Saxena is trying to form a new party which will consist of members of the RSPI [Revolutionary Socialist Party of India], Jamiat-ul-Ulma, and the Forward Block....

11. Jayaprakash Narayan Advocates Another Round of Struggle

Extracts from a news report 'Jai Prakash Narain's call for new struggle'. *Hindustan Times*, 23 July 1946.

"Now that Delhi is full of talk about the Constituent Assembly and preparations are afoot to hold it, I have come to you with a message for the next struggle for freedom in which we and our comrades are prepared to plunge heart and soul. From this day, we have to make preparations for the struggle. The people in the country have no faith in the Constituent

Assembly." Thus declared Mr Jai Prakash Narain, the Congress Socialist leader, addressing a crowded meeting in Ajmal Park on Monday evening. Mrs Aruna Asaf Ali presided....

Mr Jai Prakash Narain was critical of the way the negotiations between the Congress and the British Ministers were conducted. The talks in his view, should have proceeded on the basis of the recognition of India's independence *ipso facto* and the Congress should not have accepted the British role of [as] arbitrators. It was none of the Britishers' concern whether India would remain united or not. The Congress not only acquiesced in the British award, but also accepted to go into the Constituent Assembly on the basis of an outline of a constitution which bound them hand and foot. It was futile to expect that a Constituent Assembly formed under the terms of a British award could frame a charter for India's freedom. Such an Assembly was a hoax and a fraud and was meant to sidetrack the main issue of the next struggle for freedom....

Explaining this conception of the next struggle, Mr Jai Prakash Narain said he did not want the history of the 1942 struggle repeated when people did not know what they were to do, after razing police stations to the ground and driving out the police. He wanted to tell the people that next time they would establish their own Government, wherever British authority was wiped out. They would not rest till they had hoisted their flag on the Red Fort.

Mr Jai Prakash Narain said that the working-class would play the most important role in this movement. Such a struggle would necessarily entail a general strike throughout the country, which would result in a breakdown of communications. Government would be forced to come to terms with them if they could continue the strike for three months. The British Raj would collapse.

Replying to the criticism that Congress could not be a party to any movement involving the use of violence, Mr Jai Prakash Narain contended that the use of violence was not contrary to the Congress creed in as much as Congress had accepted non-violence merely as a matter of policy. He had great respect for Mahatmaji's conception of non-violence. He confessed that he had not enough spiritual strength to practise such non-violence. Because he could not make use of non-violence as a powerful weapon, he did not want to use it as a camouflage to cover cowardice.

Mr Jai Prakash Narain recalled that last year the Congress was prepared to support the war effort and send armies to fight the Japanese and the Germans if a national Government were established. He wanted to know whether that was in consonance with the policy of non-violence. If they could use violence against the Japanese and the Germans against whom they had no quarrel, they could legitimately use violence against the British.

Mr Jai Prakash Narain made it clear that unless Mahatma Gandhi started a movement on the basis of non-violence which could attract millions of people, they would be compelled to follow their own course. They were not satisfied with the manner the movements in 1930, 1932 and 1941 were conducted, when the Government took them unawares....

12. Forward Bloc Opposes Congress Acceptance of Office

Extracts from Weekly Report No. 38, 27 September 1946. CID Records, Government of the United Provinces; Uttar Pradesh State Archives.

...Jogesh Chandra Chatterji was the chief speaker at a meeting [of] 600 at Bahraich; he narrated incidents at Singapore and described the INA organisation and also warned his audience not

to be lulled into inactivity by the present reforms in India. The Forward Bloc have been more active and have opposed the accepting of office by Congress at the Centre....

13. Forward Bloc: Subhas Bose Still Alive

Extracts from Weekly Report No. 38, 27 September 1946. CID Records, Government of the United Provinces; Uttar Pradesh State Archives.

... The Forward Bloc have tried to strengthen their positions in Unnao and Mainpuri; they continue to assert that Subhas Bose is still alive....

14. Jayaprakash Narayan Invited to Bangalore
to Bolster Local Congress Socialist Party

Extracts from a letter by S. Iswar, Secretary, Congress Socialist Party, Bangalore, to Jayaprakash Narayan; Bangalore, 10 October 1946. File No. 27; Jayaprakash Narayan Papers (1946); Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

Bangalore,
10th October. 1946.

Dear Friend,

... When Srimathi Kamaladevi Chattopadhyaya was in Bangalore, we met her, and we were instructed by Sri U.S. Mallayya of KPCC not to carry on activities in public for some time to come. At present there is no District Congress Committee, members of which resigned *en bloc* on the eve of an enquiry into certain charges against them by Congress workers. That was in March last, and since then there is no Congress Committee but only an agent is functioning. Steps are being taken to constitute a committee at an early date.

In the meanwhile a number of mushroom organisations have been springing up and doing propaganda and collecting funds in the name of the Congress. On the other hand the Communists have completely monopolised the labour field, all local labour Unions in the Civil & Military Station being run by them. Even Tamil Nadu Congress leaders have been invited to give them support on false representations made to them in the name of Labourers' Conference. We were able to stop it last time. Even tomorrow there is a public meeting 'Jai Prakash Narain's Day' organised by the local Youth Congress newly formed whose office bearers have a questionable record in the political work in the station. Mr S.A. Rahim has agreed to come and participate in tomorrow's function by this Youth Congress. The office bearers of this organisation were running under the name of Bharati Youth League, and then a Kasturba Reading Room, and now they have blossomed into a Youth Congress and are masquerading as political workers. These persons were detained in the 1942 movement, but they subsequently appealed to the mercy of the Government and came out tendering [an] apology and became Communists, by issuing a statement in the *People's War* dated 1st Nov. 1942.

In the present circumstances, it is considered quite essential that you should take the earliest opportunity to pay a flying visit ...

Yours in service,
S. Iswar.

15. Draft Constitution for All India Congress Socialist Party Presented by Punjab Congress Socialist Party

Extracts from a letter with enclosure from Prem, of the Congress Socialist Party, Punjab, to Jayaprakash Narayan; Lahore, 16 October 1946. File No. 4 & 5; Jayaprakash Narayan Papers (1946); Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

*Lahore,
October 16, 1946.*

Respected Jayaprakash Ji,

Hope you have received my previous letter.

I am enclosing herewith a draft constitution for the All India Congress Socialist Party, for your consideration. I am sending a copy to Comrade Patwardhan also....

Yours sincerely,
Prem.

Enclosure:

Draft Constitution for All India Congress Socialist Party

Clause I: Name

The name of the Party shall be All India Congress Socialist Party. It shall be a Marxist Revolutionary Party.

Clause II: Flag

Party shall have two Flags side by side. National Flag, and Red Flag.

Clause III: Object of the Party

The object of All India Congress Socialist Party shall be achievement of Complete Independence in the sense of separation from the British Empire, and establishment of a Socialist Society....

Clause V: Membership

The Party shall consist of the members of Indian National Congress who are members of same Party Unit....

Clause X: Rights and Duties of Members

Party members will not only study Marxism, but preach it.

Members shall have to abide by the decisions of the Party.

He will have to observe Party discipline with strictness. He will have to give practical shape to the decisions of the Party.

He shall have to propagate Party literature so as to give wide publicity to the policy and programme of the Party.

He shall have to take part in the mass organisations such as Indian National Congress, Trade Union Congress, Kisan Sabha, Students' Congress and Volunteer Corps, etc.

If any member of the Party objects to any of its decisions, he shall have the right to appeal to the higher authority but will have no right to work against it....

Clause XVI: Discipline

The critical period which the Party is today passing through, demands unbreakable unity in the Party. It demands that disruptive tendencies, clique activities within the Party shall not be

tolerated. Hence executive Committee have the authority to curb these tendencies and cliques so as to maintain best unity in the rank and file of the Party....

16. Jayaprakash Narayan Advocates Direct Action

Extracts from Weekly Report No. 40, 18 October 1946. CID Records, Government of the United Provinces; Uttar Pradesh State Archives.

... Jai Prakash Narain visited Ballia and Ghazipur during the week; he described the Interim Government as only a path towards freedom; he unequivocally stated that the 1942 rebellion will have to be reenacted; he advised his audiences to have firearms and other deadly weapons at hand and to arrest district officers and take possession of police stations when the order to revolt was received. He further advised labour to down tools when the revolution started, and stated that there was a great possibility of the Bihar police siding with the freedom movement; he criticised the Muslim League and said that the money he would receive was to be used for preparation for the final struggle. At Ballia Jai Prakash Narain received purses totalling Rs 15,371, and at Ghazipur Rs 2553....

17. Azad Hind Government Day Celebrated by the Forward Bloc

Extracts from Weekly Report No. 41, 25 October 1946. CID Records, Government of the United Provinces; Uttar Pradesh State Archives.

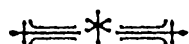
... Azad Hind Government Day was observed in a large number of districts on 21st October; members of the Forward Bloc were the principal organisers and speakers at meetings on this day. At meetings at Cawnpore, the Indian armed forces were condemned for fighting against the INA, it was asserted that Subhas Chandra Bose was alive and that both violent and non-violent methods should be adopted against the British Government....

18. Congress Socialists Set Up Branches of Hindustan Red Army in the CP and Berar

Extracts from a Special Branch report, 26 October 1946. File No. 16-A/1947; Political and Military Department, Government of the Central Provinces and Berar (1946); Madhya Pradesh State Archives.

Congress Socialist Party

601 Branches of the Hindustan Red Army were started at Saoner (Nagpur) and Malkapur (Buldana) Maganlal Bagdi and V.S. Dandekar toured Saoner (Nagpur) and Arvi (Wardha) Burhanpur, Khandwa and Malkapur (Buldana) in the same connection. Bagdi and Dandekar panegyricised violence and pointed out the success which attended such methods during the 1942 movement, criticised the capitalistic tendencies of the Congress leaders attributed responsibility for communal ill-feeling to Congress and the Muslim League and ridiculed the possibility of securing freedom by non-violent and constitutional methods....



19. Jayaprakash Narayan's Tour of the United Provinces

Extracts from Weekly Report No. 42, 1 November 1946. CID Records, Government of the United Provinces (1946); Uttar Pradesh State Archives.

... Jai Prakash Narain visited Fyzabad and Gorakhpur; he advised his audiences to throw off their complacency and prepare for a violent revolution. At both places he attributed the existing communal situation to British intrigues and advised members of both communities to sink their differences. The amount of the purses received by him at Fyzabad has not been reported, but those received at Gorakhpur totalled Rs 12,000.

This party has been increasingly active. At Aligarh they have distributed leaflets inciting peasants against zamindars. At Azamgarh, anti-zamindar propaganda conducted by Jai Bahadur and others resulted in kisans harvesting a zamindar's paddy crop; action under section 108 against Jai Bahadur is contemplated. At Cawnpore where they continue to agitate labour, they made an unsuccessful attempt to oppose hartal on 'Noakhali Day'; it is being said in this district that the Communists are preparing for a general strike in December or January. At Unnao their anti-zamindar agitation resulted in [a] petty clash between them and a zamindar's party. In another half a dozen districts they have agitated kisans and railway employees.

The zamindars have been practically inactive. The feelings between them and chamars at Azamgarh are strained. The kisans too have been inactive in most districts....

20. Swami Sahajanand on Congress' Agrarian Policy

Copy of a note by Swami Sahajanand, M.L.A., Bihar, (addressed to Jayaprakash Narayan?); Bihar, 8 November 1946. File No. 117; Jayaprakash Narayan Papers (1946); Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

*Bihar,
8 November 1946.*

As there seems a general apprehension and uncertainty regarding their future in the minds of the average kisans and the people, due mainly to the false and mischievous propaganda on the part of the zamindars, landlords, other intermediaries, whose interests are adversely affected by the Congress policy to abolish intermediaries between the peasant and the state, and as they, in consequence, have been or are being willfully led to believe that the actual cultivators too are bound to be expropriated, sooner or later, of their lands just like the zamindars & landlords, it has become necessary for the Congress to clarify and reiterate its agrarian policy as enunciated through its Election Manifesto during the last Assembly elections.

The aim of the Congress in abolishing intermediaries is to create, in the first instance, the peasant proprietors and provide them, as soon as possible, with adequate facilities for an all-round increase in agricultural produce and for their profitable sale and purchase through efficient marketing and thus create confidence in them and prepare them ultimately for, and introduce gradually, cooperative and collective farming which alone can satisfy the growing needs and demands for ever expanding national industries and thereby make the people self-sufficient.

Swami Sahajanand Saraswati,
Member, Bihar.

21. Jayaprakash Narayan Criticises Congress for Entering Interim Government

Extracts from Weekly Report No. 43, 8 November 1946. CID Records, Government of the United Provinces; Uttar Pradesh State Archives.

... Jai Prakash Narain, who visited Bara Banki and Deoria, continues to preach violence and criticise the Congress policy of entering the Interim Government. Unconsciously he also continues to foster communal discord by his condemnation of the Muslim League, a party which is now almost synonymous with the Muslim community....

22. Congress Socialist Party Activities in the United Provinces

Extracts from Weekly Report No. 43, 8 November 1946. CID Records, Government of the United Provinces; Uttar Pradesh State Archives.

... At Gorakhpur Shibban Lal Saxena, Sudama Prasad and Purnamasi Hajjam, all MLA's, have threatened the Police, exhorted the public not to appear as Police witnesses, incited tenants not to pay rent to zamindars and preached violence....

23. Berar PCC Opposes Congress Ministry's Hostility Towards Nana Patil

Report by the Sub Inspector of Police, Amraoti, to the District Superintendent of Police, Amraoti; Amraoti, 14 November 1946. File No. 9; Political and Military Department, Government of the Central Provinces and Berar (1946); Madhya Pradesh State Archives.

**Report on Activities of Nana Patil of
Satara on the 12th, 13th and 14th November in
Amraoti District**

The visit of Nana Patil to the Berar districts has been arranged by Dr P.S. Deshmukh, B.M. Deshmukh, Chairman District Council Amraoti, V.B. Choubal, pleader, and Uttam Pandurang Mohite (Amraoti) to organise Kisans and workers who are mostly non-Brahmins to strengthen the front against Brahmins and Capitalists in Berar. Dr Punjabrao Deshmukh, who is an ex-Minister has got political ambitions and he wants to have an upper hand in Berar politics with the support of non-Brahmins. He joined Congress during the last Provincial Assembly elections. He is disliked by old and prominent Congressmen of the district. He persuaded Brijlal Biyani in his capacity as Berar Provincial Congress Committee president to invite Nana Patil to visit the Berar districts to carry out the propaganda. The CP Ministers were not in favour of Nana Patil's visit and Dr P.S. Deshmukh has stated at various public meetings held in the district to accord a reception to Nana Patil, that Hon. Pandit Shukla considered Nana Patil's tour at this juncture futile and he even refused to help Dr Punjabrao Deshmukh in getting 600 gallons of petrol for Nana Patil's tour for which Punjabrao Deshmukh had applied to the Provincial authorities. Dr P.S. Deshmukh resented the hostile attitude of Hon. Pandit Shukla towards Nana Patil and he criticised the CP Ministry for discourtesy towards Nana Patil and blamed Hon. Pandits Shukla and Mishra for ignoring the authority of the Berar

Provincial Congress Committee president (Brijlal Biyani) who consented to arrange for the tour programme of Nana Patil. Dr P.S. Deshmukh is prejudicing the people against the CP Ministers over the issue.

Nana Patil with his party of Satara district people consisting of Appasahib Lad, Raosaheb Kadke, Ratharao Lad, Ramchandra Lad, Akaram Patil, Bhausahib Suhase, Bhai Pendse, Daulatrao Shidolkar, Mrs Janabai Patil, Kesharao Jedhe, member Constituent Assembly and president Maharashtra Provincial Congress Committee Poona, Dr Punjabrao Deshmukh, V.B. Chaubal, pleader, B.M. Deshmukh, Mrs Vimalbai w/o Dr Punjabrao Deshmukh, Mohad master and Shriram Patil Amraoti went on tour in the interior of the district on the 12th morning and visited Mahuli, Lahegaon, Morsi, Benoda, Warud, Sendurjana ghat on the 12th, Walgaon, Assegaon, Thugaon, Asti, Borgaonpeth, Karajgaon, Paratwada, Ellichpur, Parsapur, Pandhri, Pathrot on the 13th and Anjangaon Surji and Bhandraj on the 14th. The party left Bhandraj, P.S. Anjangaon for Akot (district Akola) on the 14th at about 11.30 a.m. Nana Patil was accorded a reception at all the places by Congressmen and was also presented with purses as shown below: Manuli Rs 51, Lehegaon Rs 151, Morsi Rs 250, Ellichpur Rs 101, Warud Rs 51, Walgaon Rs 51, Assegaon Rs 105, Paratwada Rs 251, Pathrot Rs 267, and Rs 51 by Gurudeo Sewa Mandal of Pathrot, Anjangaon Surji Rs 151, Pandhri Rs 51, and Bhandraj Rs 153.

Nana Patil and Kesharao Jedhe delivered speeches at all the places visited by them on the 12th and 13th instant, urging the audience to unite and fight to establish 'Kisan Raj' and to destroy capitalism. They blamed Congress for ignoring the interest of the Kisans and workers. Nana Patil advocated the ideology of Parallel Government established by him in Satara district and narrated some acts of sabotage, looting, etc., committed by his partymen during the 1942 disturbances. He assured the people that the amount which his party men got in the looting was spent by him in helping the villagers. The order u/s 144 CPC was served on Nana Patil at Paratwada on 13-11-1946 afternoon at about 2.30 p.m. while on his way to Karajgaon, P.S. Sirasgaon. He complied with the orders. Natharao Lad addressed gatherings on his behalf after the service of the order on him. At public meetings held at Paratwada, Ellichpur, Pathrot, Anjangaon Surji, Bhandraj, etc. Dr Punjabrao Deshmukh, and Kesharao Jedhe vehemently criticised the CP Congress Ministers for the order. Dr Punjabrao Deshmukh stated that Nana Patil would have refused to comply with the order if it were issued by the British Government but as he was a disciplined Congress soldier he would not challenge the Congress Government's order. Dr Punjabrao Deshmukh stated that he would take action against the Congress Ministers regarding the order and demanded public support. At the meeting held at Morsi on 12-11-1946 night under the presidentship of Yadaorao Gopalrao Gahukar of Morsi and attended by about 1000 persons, Kesharao Jedhe made derogatory remarks against Hon. Pandit Shukla and Hon. Pandit Mishra stating that they were not 'Pandits' but 'Pandyas' (those who squeeze money) and saying "Who is Mishra, is he who left some files in a prostitute's house at Delhi?" Nana Patil blamed the Viceroy for the communal disturbances in Bengal and Bihar and stated that the British would not quit India till they were compelled.

Nana Patil has intended to organise Berar villages on the lines of the villages organised by him in Satara district and has decided to leave Ramchandra Lad and Akaram Patil, his two prominent assistants for the purpose in Berar. The Satara party and Kesharao Jedhe, Poona, have been greatly annoyed due to the treatment given to Nana Patil by the CP Congress Ministers. Kesharao Jedhe, President, Maharashtra Provincial Congress Committee will complain against it to the Congress High Command and Dr P.S. Deshmukh will take action after consulting Brijlal Biyani. The Congressmen in general do not appreciate the action of the

Ministers and resolutions demanding immediate withdrawal of the order were passed at public meetings held at Paratwada, Ellichpur, Pathrot, Anjangaon Surji, Bhandraj, etc. The Congressmen anticipate that there would be a split in the CP Congress Ministry over this issue as the Berar MLA's would support Brijlal Biyani who invited Nana Patil to visit the Berar district and would question the Congress Ministers for imposing the ban on Nana Patil ignoring the authority of the Berar Provincial Congress president. The position of Mr Brijlal Biyani is also equally unsafe. If he supports Dr Punjabrao he would incur the displeasure of the Ministers and in case he supports the action of the Ministers, he would lose the support of the non-Brahmin party in Berar of which Dr Punjabrao Deshmukh is a leader. The Brahmin Congressmen in the district blamed Dr Punjabrao Deshmukh and V.B. Chaubal for the situation created for selfish ends.

M.C. Swamy,
SI, LIB, Amraoti.

Submitted to the D.S.P. Amraoti for favour of perusal. Nana Patil will visit Daryapur on the 18th and a public meeting will be held at Badnera on the 19th evening to accord him reception. And order u/s 144 CPC [Criminal Procedure Code] is in force within the Badnera Municipal limits. The conveners of the meeting at Badnera will ask for permission to hold the meeting and it is requested that D.M. [District Magistrate] may kindly be moved to refuse the permission.

M.C. Swamy,
SI, LIB,
Amraoti.

24. CP and Berar Congress Ministry Critical of Nana Patil's Politics

Extracts from a letter by the Sub Inspector of Police, Akola, to the District Superintendent of Police, Akola; Akola, 15 November 1946. File No. 16-31/1947; Political and Military Department, Government of the Central Provinces and Berar (1946); Madhya Pradesh State Archives

Akola,
15th Nov. 46.

Sir,

Given below is the report of the L.I.B. [?] Head Constable regarding the visit of Nana Patil of Satara to Akot on the 14th instant:

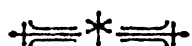
1. Nana Patil, Kesharao Jedhe, President, Maharashtra Provincial Congress Committee, Dr Punjabrao Deshmukh of Amraoti, J.S. Akarte, pleader of Akola, D.M. Kedar of Akola, in all 9, arrived at Akot in motor cars, at 11:30 a.m., one of the cars being CPM 556. An enthusiastic crowd of 3000, with a sprinkling of some Muslims, was awaiting the arrival of Nana Patil in the Cotton Market, where a public meeting was to be held. Palhade, pleader, Nagji Bhutabhai Bhatya, G.M. Gayankar were among the prominent persons who received Nana Patil and the party. On arrival a batch of 20 men with Lazim [bows] gave Nana Patil a salute and about half a dozen Sikhs made an arch of their swords through which Nana Patil passed. The party carried a loudspeaker with them. Gayankar, pleader, introduced Nana Patil who was garlanded

on behalf of about 20 organisations. The following purses, totalling about Rs 291, were presented to Nana Patil: Rs 101 by Nagji Bhatya, Rs 101 by the Akot Congress Committee, Debusingh, an ex-history sheeter [someone with a criminal record] Rs 31 and a gold ring, Akot Factory Workers' Union [Rs]26, [and] three purses of Rs 11 each.

2. Nana Patil said that he had spent the previous day in a very upset mood as he was served with an order not to deliver speeches in the Amraoti district. The same Nana Patil who had defied all the Government orders had become very anxious. Just as a drone cuts out the hardest material but when he is caught in a closed lotus he does not damage the lotus petals but only flies away at the moon shine, so also on account of the love of Congress Nana Patil did not defy the ban, but submitted to it. Now he was in the Akola district and as he was free to talk he would pour his heart [out] before the audience. Nana Patil said that he had spent 20 years of his life in the Congress. In 1942 he had gone to jail. According to M. Gandhi's "do or die" message he and his friends decided to fight out the British. He collected about 25 daring youths of Satara and chalked out plans to overthrow the government. Later on the party swelled to 400. They decided that if they could be successful in lawlessness the prestige of the British rule would be gone. In pursuance of this programme they burnt the government buildings, cut electric wires and derailed trains, taking care to see that no passengers were hurt. Nana Patil narrated how they looted government treasuries—one train dacoity of Rs 15,000 and other a mail motor dacoity of about five lacs of rupees. He pleaded that all these acts were done for the sake of the freedom of the country. He described how a Patri Sarkar of the Kisans and Mazdoors was set up and how the British rule in Satara had come to an end. Continuing he said that the Police had committed atrocities on their own bretheren [brethren] in 1942. Now the Police were under the Congress and they should take a friendly hint that in future they must behave well, should there be a repetition of a movement. He added that in future there is going to be a Kisan-Mazdoor Raj according to the Congress resolution. All the present MLA's had been elected on the strength of the votes of the Kisans and Mazdoors. He warned that the MLA's should not become swollen headed and that if they become so, they would find it difficult to be elected in the next elections. Referring to the communal situation he said that the happenings in Bengal and Bihar had their repercussions in other parts of the country. He appealed to the Hindu majority to protect the Muslim minority, and added that if the Hindus molested the Muslims he would be the first man to sacrifice his life in the cause of the communal unity. In the end he deplored that the same Congress which stood for freedom of speech should put a ban on him.

3. P.B. Deshmukh of Amraoti said that he had a talk with the Hon'ble Messrs Shukla and Mishra regarding the tour of Nana Patil and that the Ministers asked him to postpone the tour. He said that from the talk of the Ministers he was inclined to suspect that they were not in favour of Nana Patil. He said that it was a matter of great shame that Congressmen should ban the speeches of another Congressmen. At this point, K.S. Lele, a Congressmen of Akot, objected that the ban must have been put by H.E. the Governor and not the Congress Ministers. Upon this Punjabrao Deshmukh spoke slightly [slightly] of Lele and assured the public that the ban was put by the Ministers....

V.A. Rhaoji.
SI., IJB, Akola



25. Nana Patil Banned from Speaking at Public Meetings in the CP and Berar

Report submitted to the Deputy Commissioner, Akola, by A. Rahim, ANT [?], Basim; Basim, 17 November 1946. File No. 9; Political and Military Department, Government of the Central Provinces and Berar (1946); Madhya Pradesh State Archives.

Report

A public meeting was held on 16.11.1946 in honour of Nana Patil of Satara and his party in [the] Sunday market. About 6 to 7 thousands of persons including villagers were present in the meeting. The following persons had come with Nana Patil to Basim:

- (1) Dr Panjabrao of Amraoti,
- (2) Mr Kesharao Jadhav, President, Provincial CC, Poona,
- (3) Mr Bapurao Deshmukh, Chairman, District Council, Amraoti,
- (4) Mr Daulatrao Patil of Nagzari, District Wardha,
- (5) Mrs Velapure, Nagpur,
- (6) Mrs Ashabai, Nagpur,
- (7) Mr Nana, Teacher of Amraoti,
- (8) Mr Shriram Patel of Amraoti,
- (9) Mr Pandhari Patel, MLA, Buldana, ar.J
- (10) Mr Netaji Lad, Private Secretary of Nana Patil.

Anyhow to pass time till Nana Patil and his party reach[ed] the place of the meeting, from the house of Seth Kanhayalal of Basim, Daulatrao Patil introduced Nana Patil to the audience. He said Nana Patil suffered great hardship since he had gone underground from 1942. He had established Gram Raj in every village in Satara District and he punished only those who were found [by] him traitors to our Kisan and Mazdoors. Nana Patil was not caught by the Government for 44 months. He had established his independent Government and carried on the Congress movement after the leaders had gone in Jail in 1942 and thus kept the prestige of the Congress.

In the meanwhile, Nana Patil and his party men came to the place of the meeting. Nana Patil was garlanded on behalf of several *sanssthas* in Basim taluq. Rathi, pleader of Basim was in the Chair. Nathmal Seth, President of Nagpur Congress Committee, Basim and Mukandrao, teacher of village Karanji, then presented a purse of Rs 501 and Rs 31 respectively. Dr Panjabrao from Amraoti then rose to speak. He first explained how the tour programme of Nana Patil was arranged in consultation with Brijlal Biyani of Akola and further explained how he was served with a restraint order prohibiting him from making a speech, in a public meeting. He said that this is all done by the Congress Ministry and blamed the Prime Minister and D.P. Mishra a Minister. He said there are also some MLA's and persons from Nagpur at the bottom for doing all this. He said that he had been to Nagpur and when presented an application for petrol to the Prime Minister of 600 gallons, he had sanctioned only 300 gallons for their tour on Berar, but no sooner D.P. Mishra [the] Minister came, the Prime Minister who had the idea of granting permit dropped [it] and thus he said that he had to return disappointed. He was sorry to see that Nana Patil, who is a rising figure and a man worthy of being respected and who kept the Congress prestige during 1942 could have been met by the Ministry or their representative at Bhusawal a door of CP and Berar and welcomed him but instead of that they have shown

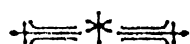
disregard and on the contrary banned his speech. He said that the Congress Government should do such [an] act, is highly condemnable. The Congress Ministry by imposing a ban on the speech of Nana Patil has stained the popular Ministry. He suspected some Brahmins are behind this move. He assured that Nana Patil would not utter a single word [word] publicly but his living symbol would be an inspiration for thousands of people who are awaiting for his Darshan. He requested the audience to force the Ministry to withdraw this arbitrary [arbitrary] order.

Keshaorao Jadhav then delivered his speech. He said that in 1942 when the movement was declared Nana Patil went underground and commenced his work of village uplift and established village Raj and thus gave impetus to the Congress resolution of "Quit India". He wanted money to run the administration and hence he raided the Government treasuries and took possession of all the communications. He never troubled the people unnecessarily, but devised [advised] them to live like brothers and forget their differences. Thus thousands of people became his followers and he became the King of all. British Government could not control his movement. Nana Patil had gone underground and could not be found for 44 months. He lived in [the] mountains, forests and carried on his work, from there. Nana Patil knew no religion. He helped all alike. He abandoned the Ramraj no sooner the Congress came in power in Satara. The speaker then condemned the action of the Prime Minister and his colleagues for imposing ban on the speech of Nana Patil in Berar. He said that people should force the Ministry to withdraw the ban, as he said that these Ministers are elected by them and they have [the] right to demand this just demand. Nana Patil, he said, is like unconquerable [unconquerable] star. He never hankered after getting higher post[s] in the Congress or the Government. The speaker said that it is the power that corrupts a man and this has taken place in respect of the CP Government, who have imposed a ban on Nana Patil, a true Congress worker.

Nathaji Lad, Private Secretary of Nana Patil, then rose to speak. He said that by closing the mouths [silencing their voices] with the help of [the] law has barred them from giving vent to their real feelings of heart. He praised Nana Patil and gave an example of [a] hen hatching and compared it with Nana Patil's Gram Raj and gave a brief account of how the Gram Raj was established in every village in Satara and people were advised to abandon all vices and be united and live like brothers. He said that the real meaning of Gram Raj is to establish the Kisan and Mazdoor Raj and to save them from the clutches of the rich, Nana Patil has destroyed the goondas and kept the flag of the Congress flying. He carried on his Government for 44 months and there was no British Rule in Satara during that period.

Thereafter Nana Patil and party left for Umarkhed.

A. Rahim,
A.N.T., Basim.



26. Vidarbha Congress Committee Organises Nana Patil's Tour

Extracts from a letter by M.R. Joshi, Deputy Commissioner, Buldana District, to C.J.W. Lillie, Commissioner, Berar; Buldana, 19 November 1946. File No. 9; Political and Military Department, Government of the Central Provinces and Berar (1946); Madhya Pradesh State Archives.

*Buldana,
19th November 1946.*

Dear Mr Lillie,

According to the programme arranged by the Vidarbha Congress Committee, Mr Nana Patil of Satara visited this district on the 14th and 15th November 1946. In accordance with the instructions of the Chief Secretary (received through the District Magistrate, Amraoti and later on confirmed by the Chief Secretary) an order under section 144 Criminal Procedure Code was passed by me on the 13th prohibiting Nana Patil to make a speech in public meetings in this district without my written permission, and this order was served on him at a distance of about a mile from Shegaon....

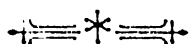
2. On the 14th Nana Patil visited Shegaon, Khamgaon, Nandura and Jalgaon. Taluq Congress Committees organised reception to him at these places. On the 15th November Mr Nana Patil visited Malkapur, Buldana and Mehkar, and on the 16th he went to Dongaon and thence left for Basim on the same day.

3. Public meetings were held at all these places, but Nana Patil did not contravene the order passed under section 144 Criminal Procedure Code. Dr Punjabrao Deshmukh of Amraoti, Mr Keshāorao Jedhe, President of the Maharashtra Congress Committee, and Mr P.S. Patil, MLA of Chikhli, who accompanied him, however, delivered speeches at the meetings and in the speeches they described the brave deeds of Nana Patil during the 1942 disturbances, and they compared him with Shivaji.

4. At every meeting the speakers, Dr Punjabrao Deshmukh, Mr Jedhe and Mr P.S. Patil, expressed that it was a great misfortune that the public who had so eagerly gathered for the message from Mr Nana Patil, were disappointed on account of the order under section 144 Criminal Procedure Code passed against him. They vehemently condemned the attitude shown by the Honourable Ministers (Messrs Shukla and Mishra) and strongly condemning the action of the Ministry.

5. Purses were offered to Mr Nana Patil at various places and the total amount received by him is reported to be Rs 3,02,080 from this district.

M.R. Joshi.
Deputy Commissioner,
Buldana District.



27. Ban on Nana Patil's Speeches Does Not Dampen His Popularity

Extracts from a report by M.G. Wynne, District Superintendent of Police, Amraoti, to G.L. Watson, Deputy Commissioner, Amraoti; 23 November 1946. File No. 9; Political and Military Department, Government of the Central Provinces and Berar (1946); Madhya Pradesh State Archives.

Report on Activities of Nana Patil from 18th to 21st November, 1946 in Amraoti District

... The tour of Nana Patil in this district was a great success. He was received by the people with great enthusiasm and they universally condemned the ban imposed on Nana Patil, who strictly complied with the order. Dr P.S. Deshmukh [of] Amraoti has gained popularity amongst the villagers. A sum of Rs 15,000 has so far been received by Nana Patil in purses presented by the people in the Berar districts.

M.G. Wynne,
DS Police, Amraoti.
23-11-1946.

28. Congress Socialist Party Activities in the Central Provinces and Berar

Extracts from a Special Branch report, 23 November 1946. File No. 16-A/1947; Political and Military Department, Government of the Central Provinces and Berar (1946); Madhya Pradesh State Archives.

Congress Socialist Party

Maganlal Bagdi, S.M. Joshi and V.S. Dandekar were the principal speakers at two large meetings held at Arvi on the 16th and 17th November and at another of 500 held at Ashti on the 16th. They extolled the 1942 martyrs, held the British responsible for the communal riots, criticised statements made by members of Government in praise of the police who outraged the modesty of women in 1942 and stated that the Red Army would support the Congress till the British were expelled after which their aim would be to fight reactionary forces which opposed the workers' rule.

29. Revolutionary Socialist Party Activities in the United Provinces

Extracts from Weekly Report No. 46, 29 November 1946. CID Records, Government of the United Provinces; Uttar Pradesh State Archives.

... Members of the RSP, when addressing several meetings at Gorakhpur, criticised the Congress, preached the cult of revolution, abused and advocated revenge against the police for recording their speeches; the principal offenders were Chaitan Deo Tewari of Deoria, Rup Narain Pandey of Allahabad and Ram Nath Singh of Ghazipur. At Jaunpur Rajdeo Singh has organised a Socialist Party Convention, which is being attended by a few persons from Bombay and Punjab; Manmath Nath Gupta is one of the persons attending this convention the details of which have not yet been reported....

30. Forward Bloc Activities in the United Provinces

Extracts from Weekly Report No. 47, 6 December 1946. CID Records, Government of the United Provinces; Uttar Pradesh State Archives.

... The Forward Bloc has been busy organising the party at Agra and Banda. Congress volunteers have been inactive.

Workers of this party have continued to organise kisans at Agra and Unao, to agitate factory and mill labour at Agra, Lucknow and Cawnpore and to exploit the economic distress in a few districts; they are also unsettling railway employees at Agra, Cawnpore and Jhansi. At Allahabad and Benares they are arranging receptions and purses for Ganesh Ghosh and Niranjan Sen, two Chittagong Armoury Raid Case prisoners, recently released by the Bengal Govt. who are to visit these districts; these two revolutionaries are expected to visit also Agra, Cawnpore, Jhansi and Lucknow. At Benares they have started a volunteer organisation, which they have named the Sewak Sangh; 12 volunteers have been enrolled so far....

31. Revolutionary Socialist Party Activities in the United Provinces

Extracts from Weekly Report No. 48, 13 December 1946. CID Records, Government of the United Provinces; Uttar Pradesh State Archives.

... The RSP has been organising kisans and labourers at Basti and advocated violence at Azamgarh, Farrukhabad, Ghazipur, Muzaffarnagar and Mirzapur where they observed Raj Narain Misra Day on December 9 by taking out small procession and holding meetings. The Nav Yuvak Sangh of Agra also observed this day by holding a small meeting [of] 25 at which Raj Narain Misra was praised....

32. Revolutionary Socialist Party Activities in the United Provinces

Extracts from Weekly Report No. 49, 27 December 1946. CID Records, Government of the United Provinces (1946); Uttar Pradesh State Archives.

... Jogesh Chander Chatterji, the leader of the RSP in the UP, made a 3 day tour of the Etah district from December 21, 1946. He addressed several meetings at which he bitterly criticised the non-violent policy of Mr Gandhi and the Congress for having accepted office. He dwelt on the 1942, movement and urged upon his listeners to strengthen the Azad Hind Fauj which he said every young man should join to acquire a 'military spirit'....

33. Jayaprakash Narayan's Tour of the United Provinces

Extracts from Weekly Report No. 49, 27 December 1946. CID Records, Government of the United Provinces; Uttar Pradesh State Archives.

... Jai Prakash Narain, the Congress Socialist leader, visited Jaunpur, Benares, Cawnpore and Azamgarh in the course of a whirlwind tour of part of the Province. At Jaunpur he addressed 8 meetings of audiences ranging from one thousand to ten thousand; at Benares which he visited on December 18 and 19 he addressed several meetings in the rural areas and also visited the Benares Hindu University and Central Hindu Girls' School. His largest audience here was 15,000 at the D.A.V. College. At Azamgarh which he visited on the 26th and 27th he

addressed 9 meetings on the first day and was then called away to Delhi on an urgent summons from Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. All his speeches were anti-British and anti-Muslim League and he warned his audience to prepare for a mass revolution on a larger scale even than that of 1942; he asked them to collect arms and ammunition; when the time came he said, Police Stations and Government offices would be captured, Governors of Provinces would be arrested and fresh Police and Military units would be formed. At Cawnpore he stated that this battle against the British Government would be declared after six months when, after the framing of the Constitution by the Constituent Assembly, the President would ask the Viceroy to quit. His speeches everywhere are reported to have been most effective and enthusiastically received. At Jaunpur, Benares, Cawnpore and Azamgarh he was presented with purses of Rs 16,500, Rs 15,000, Rs 77,500 and Rs 4175 respectively; this money, he said would be utilised for the organisation of the people for the coming struggle....

34. Maganlal Bagdi Thinks Constituent Assembly will Sink Indian Nationalism

Extracts from a Special Branch report, 28 December 1946. File No. 16-A/1947; Political and Military Department, Government of the Central Provinces and Berar (1946); Madhya Pradesh State Archives.

Congress Socialist Party

752. Addressing a meeting of 300 held at Umrer (Nagpur) on the 13th December 1946 Maganlal Bagdi criticised the Congress for being a body of capitalists and Congressmen for working for personal gain. He averred that the acceptance of office by Congress was a folly and that Congress leaders were being deluded by British diplomats as freedom could never be secured without an upheaval. He spoke in appreciation of the mutiny among Naval Ratings and in the Air Force and said India's lost a good opportunity to gain their freedom when they failed to support the mutineers.

752(c). At another public meeting of 400 held on the 25th December Maganlal Bagdi described the Congress sponsored Constituent Assembly as a morass into which Indian nationalism would sink and said that the Congress paid no heed to the warning of socialists who saw through the plot of the British and were adequately prepared to uproot British Imperialism and Capitalism on the failure of the Consenbly [Constituent Assembly]. He said the Congress was degenerating due to the avarice and growing capitalist tendency of its members and condemned the Congress Government for carrying on in the footsteps of the Bureaucracy which harassed them in 1942....

2.v COMMUNISTS

1. Ruffians Manhandle Women Workers of Mahila Atma Raksha Samity

Extracts from a featured column, 'A patriot's notebook'. *People's Age*, 6 January, 1946.

Looking through the Calcutta *Amrita Bazar Patrika* of December 25, I came across the following headings: "Abuse of Congress flag—attack on ladies". "Mrs Mahalanobis's story of political goondaism".

Below, there was a statement issued to the Press by Shrimati Rani Mahalanobis, President of the Bengal Mahila Atma Raksha Samity (Women's Self-Defence Organisation, MARS), herself a respected name among Calcutta women and wife of Prof. Prasant Mahalanobis, FRS, one of India's foremost statisticians.

Shrimati Rani Mahalanobis herself emphasises that the MARS is a non-party women's organisation which has a membership of 40,000 all over the Province and whose object is "to unite all sections of women in a common endeavour of service." Among them there are Communists as well as Congresswomen and many like herself, who do not belong to any political party. Mrs Nellie Sen Gupta (Congresswoman) was the President of the Samity last year.

"Cowardly Attack on MARS Workers"

The statement then declares: "Certain cowardly attacks on some of the workers of the Mahila Atma Raksha Samity make it necessary for me to issue this appeal to the general public to see that we are allowed to carry on our work unhampered by party strife. About ten days ago a group of young men wearing Gandhi caps and carrying Congress flags accosted the woman worker in charge of the Samity's school for poor children in Bowbazar and shouted, "We shall not allow any Communists to live or work in this quarter." This created so much trouble that our worker was forced to close down the school.

"The same thing happened the next day and we thought it advisable to approach Mrs Sarojini Naidu who was extremely indignant to hear of these incidents. She herself phoned to Maulana Abul Kalam Azad and arranged for us to see him.

"The Congress President listened to us with great sympathy and declared that life in Bengal would become impossible if people could not carry on with complete freedom such work as we were doing. He assured us that he would do everything in his power to help us. The very next day, Mr Kalipada Mukherjee, Secretary, BPCC, was sent for by the Congress President to the Samity's office to make enquiries and since then he has repeated his visits a number of times.

"The matter, however, did not end here. A little later a still more ugly incident took place. Some of our workers had gone to the school and were waiting there for Kalipada Babu but before he arrived there a group of miscreants threatened and shouted at our workers, and a ruffian was even shameless enough to assault physically one of the ladies.

"It is not necessary to make any comments. It is the responsibility of the Congress to see that its name is not associated with such hooliganism and of the general public to see that such incidents are not repeated.

Maulana Azad's Silence

Shrimati Mahalanobis's statement speaks for itself. All that I shall add is that as early as December 12, a group of Calcutta Communist workers met Maulana Azad, gave him factual reports of assaults on the Communists in the name of the Congress and appealed to him to issue a statement condemning such hooliganism.

The Congress President disregarded the appeal and did not issue any public statement. He contented himself with telling them that the Congress creed is one of non-violence; that people who shout Congress slogans are not necessarily Congressmen; and that in any case, the Communists were the first to start violence in Bombay and Poona!

It was this last part of his statement which was splashed most prominently in the all-India Nationalist Press! Did it not amount to an indirect encouragement to the goondas to go ahead against the Communists?

Even when the MARS deputation met him, the Congress President did not issue a public statement, but caused private "enquiries" to be made on the spot.

It was left to that grand old lady, Mrs Sarojini Naidu, to come forward and boldly denounce such goondaism at a public meeting in Calcutta....

Bombay's Example: Spreading Canker

In Bombay too, Mahila workers were being abused and treated vulgarly by hooligans. The other day, as Ahalya Rangnekar, a Communist girl worker of the Parel Mahila Sangh, was leaving Parel Railway station, three or four student hooligans who have made it a habit of passing indecent remarks at Communist girls, accosted her saying:

"O Communist girl, please look at us, we are handsomer than your Communist comrades." ...

2. Protests Against Curbs on Dissemination of News of 1942 Repressions

Extracts from an editorial, 'Attack on the press'. *People's Age*, 6 January 1946.

The UP Government continuing the evil traditions of Hallet (ex-UP Governor) struck against three leading nationalist daily newspapers of the province in a single month. The *National Herald* and the *Sainik* (of Agra) were asked to deposit heavy securities and the security of the *Sansar* was forfeited earlier.

The Bihar Government had similarly demanded a security from the *Searchlight*.

The chief crime of these newspapers seems to have been that recently they published reports of the atrocities committed by the military and the police in certain districts during the August 1942 days....

The entire country must protest against these attacks on the Press. The All India Newspaper Editors' Conference must take up this issue immediately. The Government must be forced by popular pressure to rescind their orders.

3 Communist Party's Electioneering Stance

Extracts from a news report, 'Congress-League unity essential'. *Statesman*, 6 January 1946

Calcutta, January 14. The Communist Party's first slogan in the elections is India's freedom right now on the basis of a united front of all parties, said Mr P.C. Joshi, General Secretary of the Communist Party of India, addressing a rally of workers here.

Mr Joshi said there are three main parties, the Congress, the League and the Communist Party. Unlike the Congress and the League, the Communist Party had demanded full freedom from the day of its inception.

"Why should not all parties fighting for freedom unite? Why do they fight amongst themselves instead?" ..

The Communist Party did not want to confiscate all capital at the moment, but they must have a real people's government to control the investments. The fight was against Imperialism, against mahajans, against landlords—against all the anti-social elements.

Mr Joshi said the Communist Party supported the Pakistan demand on the basis of justice and freedom to everybody. The Communist Party asserted that unless the Congress and the League reached a settlement neither freedom nor Pakistan could be achieved.—API.

4. Communist Party's Bombay Offices Attacked

Report, 'Communist press set fire to'. *Free Press Journal*, 24 January 1946

Fire was set to the Press where the *People's Age*, the organ of the Communist Party of India, is being printed, this evening by some miscreants, taking advantage of the confusion created by police operations. It is feared that heavy damage has been caused as a result of this fire.

The miscreants also attacked the Headquarters of the Communist Party and several inmates of the Party are believed to have received injuries. Allegations of the stone throwing indulged in by the inmates of the Communist Party's building were also made.

The police arrived later on the scene and resorted to lathi charge. The people thereafter dispersed.

5. Mahatma Gandhi Condemns Attack on Communist Party Offices

News report, 'Bombay outrage on communist headquarters'. *Free Press Journal*, 25 January 1946.

Madras, January 24. Reports of the attack on the headquarters of the Communist Party of India in Bombay, have been received with deep concern in Mahatma Gandhi's camp at Hindustan Nagar.

Mahatma Gandhi, in an interview, said, "If the report about the damage to Communist persons and properties is true, I consider it disgraceful. Whatever may be the differences between Communists and others, they must be respected, as others will wish theirs to be respected. Every act of popular violence is detrimental to people's progress."

6. M.N. Roy on the Rise of Fascism in India

Extracts from a letter to the editor by M.N. Roy; 24 January 1946. *Statesman*, 31 January 1946.

Calcutta,
January 24, 1946.

Sir,

I presume that you will fail to comment on the ominous event which may be overlooked by others experiencing the ecstasy of hero worship. The event is the deliberate, and evidently well-organised, attack on the headquarters of the Communist Party in Bombay, during the celebration of Subhas Bose's birthday.

The report is that "a crowd" committed the act of violence. Undoubtedly it was a political crowd, and people present should have no difficulty in identifying the culprits. It was Fascist

vandalism on the classical pattern—the Communist bookshop was ransacked and the un-Indian Marxist literature thrown into a bonfire.

I happened to be the first to give warning against the danger of rising Fascism in this country. Although I was generally regarded as alarmist and many branded me as something worse, the danger has grown, until India today is much like Germany in 1929–30 on the eve of Hitler's advent to power. Nevertheless many "Leftists" found solace in the illusion that every Indian being anti-imperialist was automatically anti-Fascist. "It cannot happen here"—that was the complacent belief. I do not know if the belief is shaken even now....

Will India also make that experience? Will she be victim of an alliance between decrepit British Imperialism and rising native Fascism?

Yours, etc.,
M.N. ROY.

7. Police Incriminate Communist Workers in the Dadhipedhi (CP and Berar) Dacoity Case

Extracts from a memorandum by the District Superintendent of Police, Amraoti, to the Deputy Inspector General of Police, Western Range, Nagpur; Amraoti, 13 April 1946. File No. 14; Political and Military Department, Government of the Central Provinces and Berar; Madhya Pradesh State Archives.

Memorandum

2. Accused Vinayak Chavan of Chandur Railway [the name of a village] was further interrogated and he gave a more detailed statement on 27-3-46. He stated that Dhangala, P.S. Nandgaon, dacoity case and Dadhi dacoity case were committed by the same gang.

3. The activities of the Communist Party started in Chandur Railway Tahsil in connection with elections of [to] the Provincial Assembly in September, 1945. The party was badly in need of funds and Mukerjee of Nagpur and Huddar of Wardha were constantly visiting Chandur Railway and other villages in the Tashil. They were holding open and secret meetings throughout the Tahsil. The crackers or the country bombs used in frightening the villagers were prepared by Huddar of Wardha and the information of the place of offence was furnished by the Badnera Communists.

4. It is learnt that the house of Dr Diwanji, a labour leader of Badnera was used for halting purposes. It is further learnt that the stranger who left the holdall containing arms and ammunition on 8-3-46 at Badnera Railway Station platform was Baburao Surve of Bombay who concealed himself in the house of Dr Diwanji after he escaped from the Railway platform. Sub-Inspector Deshmukh of this district who was educated in Poona has been sent to Bombay to trace Baburao Surve.

5. On the information furnished by accused Chavan it was decided to organise simultaneous searches in Chandur Railway Tahsil, Badnera, Amraoti, Wardha and Nagpur. The houses of the following persons were searched on 28-3-46 but no incriminating article excepting spears were found:

- (1) M.D. Deshpande of Amraoti.
- (2) Nana Sable of Badnera.
- (3) Vishwashrao Deshmukh of Badnera.

- (4) Pandurang Savarkar of Badnera.
- (5) Govind Sable of Badnera.
- (6) Umashankar Gujrathi of Badnera.
- (7) G.M. Huddar of Wardha.
- (8) Shankarrao Dighade of Nimbhora, P.S. Teosa.
- (9) Shankarrao Mali of Amla, P.S. Kurha.
- (10) Sukersingh Rajput of Kurha.
- (11) W.N. Deshpande of Sendurjana, P.S. Warud.
- (12) Manikrao Kunbi of Teosa.
- (13) Vithoba Kunbi of Teosa.
- (14) Wamanrao Govindrao Kale of Sundurjana, P.S. Teosa.
- (15) Communist Office, Nagpur.

The following persons have also been arrested on various dates between 28-2-46 to 2-4-46:

- (1) Pandurang Akaji Savarkar of Badnera.
- (2) Nana s/o Gangaram Sable of Badnera.
- (3) Vishwasrao Vithalrao Deshmukh of Badnera.
- (4) Madhav Deshrath Deshpande of Amraoti.
- (5) D.J. Paranjpe of Nagpur.
- (6) Gopal Mukund Hudder [alias] Gangadhar Balwant Udhoji of Wardha.
- (7) W.N. Deshpande of Amraoti.
- (8) Namdeo Govind Thakre, motor driver of Amraoti.

6. In all so far 19 persons have been arrested. 11 persons arrested in the beginning were kept on police remand but excepting Chavan no other accused made any useful statement. All the persons have now been remanded to magisterial custody.

7. Of the 19 persons arrested 9 have been identified in various identification parades by the inmates of the house and other persons in Dadhi dacoity case. Some of them have been identified by two or three witnesses.

8. Mukerjee of Nagpur Conspiracy Case fame appears to be the leader of the gang and he was reported to be present in Amraoti on 28-3-46 but he escaped to some unknown destination on hearing the arrests of other comrades leaving his bedding behind in the house of V.D. Brahma, pleader of Amraoti. He has since evaded arrest.

9. The statements of all the accused persons have been recorded and they appear to have made contradictory statements of their presence and movements on or about the date on which the two dacoity cases occurred. They are being verified by Inspector Mohd. Azim Khan of the CID and other local officers.

10. The finger prints and prints of palm which were sent to the expert for comparison were not very satisfactory and the expert has arrived at Amraoti to take them personally.

11. The Communist Party are trying their best to hamper the investigation. They are contributing articles in the press and distributing leaflets alleging the high-handedness of the police. They are also spreading false rumours and carrying on propaganda in Nagpur and Amraoti districts. Dr Diwanji of Badnera was called to the P.S. [police station] for interrogation and he arranged a procession and partial strike of the mill workers.

12. I feel that accused Chavan has not made a full disclosure and he is not likely to state anything in court.... He could not give any clue of the stolen property but he stated that heavy expenses were incurred by the party after the commission of the offence.

13. I am deliberately refraining from sending official Supplementary Report and I am keeping all concerned informed of the progress of the investigation.

P.C. Saksena.
Distt. Supdt. of Police,
Amraoti.

8. Communists Arrested in the Dadhipedhi Dacoity Case Accuse Police of Brutality

Letter by B.K. Diwanji, President, Badnera Municipal Committee, to Ravi Shanker Shukla, Prime Minister, CP and Berar; Badnera, 10 May 1946. File No. 14; Political and Military Department, Government of the Central Provinces and Berar; Madhya Pradesh State Archives.

*Badnera,
10th May 1946.*

Sir,

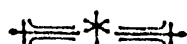
In the so called Dadipedhee Dacoity case Comrade Sawarkar Vishwasrao and Hanasahib Sable were arrested along with other on the 28th of March. But this [was] not all that the police did. In the name of investigation started the harassment of the police. Myself and other members of the Communist Party and sympathisers of the party were every now and then called to the police station and insulted by the CID police. A constable would come at odd hours to the houses of the comrades and ask them to come to the police station where they were being detained for hours together.

That the charge against the Communists was fantastic and baseless because [became] obvious when the police on its own had to apply to the Magistrate to discharge the accused. Though the police got [it] in their neck[s] for all their doings—indiscriminate arrests and torture of communist workers they have not yet stopped their atrocious behaviour [behaviour]. On the 8th of May a police constable came with a list of 18 names asking all of them to come to the police station where they were kept under detention for more than two hours by the new CID inspector who began questioning about dacoity at another place called Danger [Dhangala]. Com. Gajanan Deshmukh was particularly put to much trouble.

We want to reiterate that as Communists we have nothing to do with dacoity. Ours is a revolutionary Party of the working people having faith in mass action. The police by persuing [pursuing] this mad game of Communist hunting is really helping the real culprits. Their conduct in the name of investigation is nothing short of deprivation of civil liberties of people and highly provocative. Further it leads to the irresistible inference that the Police must be in league with the dacoity and that is why they are interested in deliberate misdirection of the investigation.

With the coming of popular ministries in the province may we hope a stop will be put to this atrocious behaviour [behaviour] of the Police?

B.K. Diwanji,
President, Badnera Municipal Committee.



9. Police Release Communists Arranged in Connection with Dadhipedhi Dacoity

Letter by B.N. Mukherjee, Secretary, CP and Berar Provincial Communist Party, to the Home Minister, Government of the CP and Berar; Nagpur, 19 May 1946. File No. 9-174/1947; Political and Military Department, Government of the Central Provinces and Berar (1946); Madhya Pradesh State Archives.

Nagpur City,
19.5.1946.

Sir,

We thank you for moving the matter submitted to you through a Memorandum on the 2nd of May 1946 and discharging 19 workers of the Communists Party. But at the same time we are submitting to you certain facts of the police investigation and the circumstances under which the arrests of our comrades took place, so that a departmental enquiry is made into the conduct of the police officials responsible for investigation. This demand that we are making is in the interest of the civil liberties of the people, so that in future the police officials do not flirt with the liberties of innocent people.

From the circumstances under which our Comrades were arrested and from the subsequent conduct of the police during the so-called investigation two inferences come out very sharply:

- 1) Either the police officer must have a hand in the dacoity itself; or
- 2) They must have been bribed by interested persons wishing success of Raghunathmal Kōchar, the Congress candidate.

When we make this allegation, we do not thereby charge the Congress organisation or Congressmen as such, but we mean that some individual Congressmen are responsible for the arrest of our comrades.

The circumstances under which the comrades were arrested:

The Communist election campaign was in full swing. The Marathi Cultural squad of Bombay was giving its programme from 12th of March onwards, '*Shetjiche isekshan*' and '*Aksechi gosht*' which depicted life of peasantry under Marwari usury in Berar. Every programme drew thousands of disposed [dispossessed] peasants in Berar and inspired a new faith in them to get back their lost land. The supporters of Raghunathmal Kochar, Marwari Congress candidate, got panicky. Their main concern became how to stop this propaganda of the Communists. Bhagirath Seth, supporter of Raghunathmal Kochar and nephew of the deceased Maniklal Seth at whose house the dacoity was committed supplied the cue just 3 days before the election.

On the 22nd of March when our squad after giving its programme in Chandur on the 21st was going to Kalashi, about 38 workers of the Communist Party were cordoned by armed police constables headed by the DSP and ADSP at the Railway Station. All these 38 workers were detained for five hours and later 11 comrades were arrested and rest let off. Seth Bhagirath was present when the arrests were made.

In these 11 arrested comrades were the members of the cultural squad (Com. Usha Urdhwareshe was the only member of the squad who was not arrested because she happened to be a girl). What does the arrest of the entire squad show? It is common knowledge that the squad was giving programme since the 12th of March before vast audiences. On the 14th the date on which the alleged dacoity took place between the same hours, the squad was giving

their performance at Amla (Bisheswar) in Chandur Tehsil far off from the scene of dacoity. The police knew full well this fact and yet the members of the squad were arrested. This circumstance strongly draws the two inferences made out in this Memorandum, viz., either police must have a hand in the dacoity itself and they are interested in misdirecting the investigation, or they are bribed to stop the election campaign of the Communists.

Besides them, was arrested Com. Samuel George Lazarus, our loudspeaker operator. His arrest also strongly leads to the inferences we have drawn.

Thus having arrested eleven members of the Communist Party, they started arresting more Communists to make up a false case. After the arrest of our comrades on 22nd March 1946, Seth Brijlal Biyani (President of Berar Provincial Congress Committee) had two or three public meetings. But not a word of protest or condemnation against this attack of the police on the political workers came out in his speech when Mr Dindayal Gupta, President Nagpur Congress Committee and Mr Abdul Salam Farooqui, President Nagpur District Muslim League, immediately issued statements condemning the police action as an uncalled for interference in election. Seth Raghunathmal Kochar and Seth Bhandari when spoken to about this, had not even the courtesy to talk decently. But they were not slow in taking advantage of the arrests. Their supporters immediately started the campaign "Do not vote for dacoits". "If you vote for the Red Flag, police would arrest you".

News appeared in *Matribhumi*, Seth Biyani's paper, that Com. B.N. Mukherjee has absconded when the Magistrate did not declare him as an absconder. What is this if not egging the police to arrest Com. B.N. Mukherjee.

Conduct of the Police during investigation:

The police took searches of our offices in Nagpur and Chandur and the houses of our arrested comrades and others. But in all these searches nothing incriminating was found and yet the police persisted in their mad hunt of the Communists.

Knowing full well that the Communists have no hand in the alleged dacoity, after having arrested 19 workers of the Communist Party, the police wanted to concoct a case, and they started third degree methods of coercing and torturing the arrested persons.

Com. Vinayak Chouhan, a boy of tender age, was from the very beginning segregated from the rest. To make him say a fabricated story he was even subjected to electric shocks till he fainted. Several times while in Police custody in Amraoti and Badnera, he was drugged so that in subconscious state of mind he would agree to sign a fabricated statement by the police. Mr Kazi, Circle Inspector of Police in charge of the investigation even threatened to kill him, if he did not agree to say as the police wanted him to say.

Com. Vithal Yadao Rachalwar (Wardha) was stripped naked. Com. Mulankar was handcuffed and tied to a cot while Mr Khan, CID Inspector carried on his questioning lying down on the same cot.

Coms. Mulankar (Nagpur), Dhondi Mahadu (Bombay), Namdeo (Amraoti), Vithal Yadao, Dhondiram Nana (Bombay) were filthily abused and made to stand for nights together with their hands stretched on the plea of 'questioning' and often the investigating officers came drunk.

This inhuman and brutal treatment under the police custody was all for terrorising the young political workers into accepting to speak as the Police wanted them to.

Besides torturing the above mentioned arrested comrades, the police illegally detained Com. Manikrao Deshmukh and Com. Vithalrao of Tewsa (Amraoti District) at the police station, Badnera for three days. They further harassed the Kisan Sabha workers in Chandur

Tehsil. Com. Punlik, Challe Com. Gulabrao Wankhede of Varba village were also made to sit for hours together in the police station. Com. Balwantrao Deshande Ramsing, Com. Daporikar, Mr S.T. Wankhede of Chandur, our Kisan Sabha workers were persecuted and their palm impressions were forcibly taken. These are many others who were also put to similar harassment.

Such were the atrocities committed by the police in the name of investigation. We could give you further facts detailing the wanton conduct of the police.

The police withdrew the case on the 4th of May stating in their application to the Magistrate that sufficient evidence to warrant prosecution has not been obtained when on the same date, the bail application was coming for hearing before the Sessions Judge. Having failed to work up a case even falsely by third degree methods, the Police could not stand the decision of the Sessions Judge and requested the counsel of the accused, to withdraw the bail application.

Prayer

Real culprits are still at large. In the interest of justice and in the interest of civil liberties of people, we request you to institute public as well as departmental enquiries into the conduct of the police officers in charge of the investigation.

B.N. Mukherjee.

Secretary,

CP & Berar Provincial Communist Party.

10. Police Rebut Communist Party Allegations in the Dadhipedhi Case

Extracts from a memorandum by the District Superintendent of Police, Amraoti, to the Deputy Inspector General of Police, Western Range, Nagpur; Amraoti, 23 June 1946. File No. 9-174/1947; Political and Military Department, Government of the Central Provinces and Berar (1946); Madhya Pradesh State Archives.

... I give below a detailed report on the allegations made to Hon'ble Minister in charge of Home Department by the Secretary of the CP and Berar Provincial Communist Party regarding the arrest of the Communist Party workers in the Dedhi Pedhi armed dacoity case and the alleged maltreatment meted to them by the police....

4. Before dealing with the allegations made in the petition referred to above it would be desirable to give a brief account of the offences committed and the circumstances which led to the arrest of the accused persons.

5. In the early hours of the morning of 14-3-1946 an armed dacoity was committed in the house of Mahadeo Kunbi of village Dhangala, P.S. Nandgaon and cash amounting to Rs 7000 was stolen. The dacoits were about 15 in number and they were armed. Crackers which may presumably be country bombs were used to frighten away the villagers. The offence is being investigated by Inspector Labhchand of the CID. The same evening another armed dacoity was committed in the house of Seth Maniklal in village Dadhipedhi, P.S. Loni. The dacoits were about 20 to 30 in number and armed with firearms and country bombs. During the course of the dacoity Seth Maniklal and his servant Ranjit Singh were shot dead and property worth over Rs 85,000 along with two 12-bore guns, swords and spears were taken away. During the offence the accused persons considerably harassed Seth Narayandas brother of the deceased for handling over the revolver which the accused thought that the deceased had one. Country

bombs were used to frighten the villagers and inmates of the house. The pieces of the containers and glass pieces were found near the scene of occurrence on search. It may be mentioned that on 8-3-46 a passenger having a second class ticket from Bombay to Badnera got down from 1 Dn. Mail and when he was questioned about his luggage by Ticket Collector he decamped leaving his bedding behind. On search of the bedding 2 revolvers, one automatic pistol, one 12-bore gun and ammunition for all these weapons were found. The two dacoities occurred a week later and with the background of the finding of arms and ammunition at Badnera Railway Station, the suspicion in these cases fell on outside persons of Communists or terrorists outlook. Subsequent enquiries showed that an offence of dacoity had also occurred in the house of a Marwadi in Nasik district on 1-3-46. Firearms were freely used and the complainant was shot dead besides several others including a Police man were injured. The Cultural Squad had also off and on [been] visiting West Khandesh not very far from the scene of occurrence during the period. The case has remained undetected. Enquiries have also brought [to] light that the gun which was left behind by a passenger at Badnera Railway Station, was stolen from Satara district by the underground terrorist workers of 'Patri Sarkar'

6. The propaganda for the elections for Provincial Assembly was in progress and a number of Communist workers from Bombay Presidency, and Central Province had collected in Chandur Railway Tahsil where a Communist candidate was set up to contest the elections. The enquiries were directed towards these workers, and to confirm the suspicion, Bhagirath, munim of the deceased Marwadi [and] who was with the culprits for very nearly two hours during the course of the dacoity was sent to Chandur Railway on 21-3-46 to identify the Communist workers in a rally arranged by the party. He definitely identified 3 persons and pointed them out to the Sub-Inspector who had accompanied him in mufti and subsequently verified by Inspector Mohd. Azim Khan of the CID. This information was communicated to Headquarters and as the Communist workers were dispersing for various places it was decided to push up the enquiry vigorously. He identified Vinayak Jagannath Chavan of Chandur Railway, Mathura Prasad Malik of Hansapuri, Nagpur and Dhondi Nana Maratha of Bombay as three of the dacoits. Besides these three persons, 8 other persons residents of Nagpur, Bombay, Poona and Satara were also arrested as there was reasonable suspicion of their complicity in the dacoity. They had refused earlier during the course of election propaganda to give out their correct names and addresses. It was considered that once they dispersed it would be difficult to trace them. On 24-3-46 an identification parade of these 11 persons was held before respectable witnesses and out of 11 persons 8 were identified either by Seth Narayandas brother of the deceased or by other inmates of the house and neighbours who were present at the time of the commission of the dacoity. All these witnesses had seen the culprits in lamplight during the commission of the dacoity and there was no reason to doubt their veracity in identifying the right persons. The accused who were identified were all outsiders and the witnesses had absolutely no motive in implicating them.

7. During the course of interrogation accused Chavan had admitted his complicity in the dacoity along with his other associates. On his statement, houses of the other suspected persons were simultaneously searched on the morning of 28-3-46 at Amraoti, Badnera, Anjangaon Bari, Teosa, Kurha, Nimbhora, Wardha and Nagpur. 8 other suspected persons who were named by Chavan were also arrested at different places. B.N. Mukerjee, Secretary of the CP and Berar Provincial Communist Party was stated to be the leader of the gang and he made himself scarce leaving his bedding in Amraoti town.

8. Out of 19 accused persons arrested G.B. Udhoji [alias] Hudder of Wardha is a previous convict of Balaghat dacoity case of 1931, another accused Vishwasrao of Badnera was convicted in Timtala Conspiracy case of P.S. Badnera in Amraoti district in 1943 while accused P.A. Sawarkar and W.N. Deshpande were let off in appeal in the same case.

9. It may be pointed out specifically that the petition under reference is from B.N. Mukerjee, Secy., CP and Berar Provincial Communist Party who was himself involved in the Dadhipedhi dacoity case and evaded his arrest. He is a previous convict of Nagpur Conspiracy case of 1933. His records in the Special Branch will show that he has always been attempting to form terrorist gang[s]. He had been to Bombay after 8-3-46 and returned with the members of the Maratha Cultural Squad of Bombay on 12-3-46 two days prior to the occurrence.

10. It may be pointed out that one of the 11 accused persons who were produced before the magistrate had any complaint to make. They had even no objection to their being remanded to police custody which was granted by the magistrates.

11. The arrested accused persons were all produced before S.30 Magistrate Amraoti who had examined cases of all these accused carefully by going through the case diary and he was satisfied that the arrests of all the persons were justified. He had also rejected their bail application as he was satisfied that their detention was justified. Accused Chavan after he made admission implicating himself and the other Communist workers in the dacoity case was produced before me on 27-3-46 and he made no allegations of any illtreatment on the part of the police. He had also admitted before me the commission of the offence but he could not give any information about the whereabouts of the stolen property. He had further stated that the stolen property was not distributed and had alleged that the property was concealed with the knowledge of the leader B.N. Mukerjee. He also stated that the cash secured in the dacoity case was being spent then for the propaganda of the Communists candidate S.G. Dighade of the party and the other property has been treated as party fund.

12. I am reporting below serially on the allegations made in the petition under reference

(a) It is alleged that either the police officers may have had a hand in the commission of the dacoity or they must have been bribed by the Congress workers to achieve success in the elections of Congress candidate Mr Raghunathmal Kochar. These allegations are entirely baseless and they do not call for any comment. The Congress candidate was not in need of such underhand help and he was all along in strong position to contest the elections. The police was not interested in the success or failure of either party in the Assembly elections.

(b) The searches made by the police during the investigation were quite legal and done on reasonable grounds.

(c) The allegation that the accused Chavan and some of the other accused were illtreated by the police during the investigation are entirely false. None of the accused persons were illtreated in any way. The accused persons were produced before the magistrate from time to time but for the first time the allegations of harassment were made on 13-4-46. Accused Tatyia [alias] Mulankar stated on 13-4-46 after about three weeks of his arrest before the magistrate that on 2-4-46 he was tied to a chair, i [cot] and not allowed to sleep while he was in police custody. This Tatyia [alias] Mulankar was produced at least twice after 2-4-46 and before 16-4-46 before a magistrate but he had no such allegations to make. The accused Vithal Yadeo Rachalwar who is alleged to have been stripped naked [naked] had no such allegations to make before the magistrate although he was produced at least half a dozen times before the magistrate. If these persons had been illtreated in the manner it is stated in the petition there

must have been some marks of injuries on their persons which would have been easily found out on their admission to the jail even if they had made no complaint to the magistrate. No injuries were found on the persons of any of the accused on their admission to the jail.

(d) Accused Vinayak Chavan is not a boy of tender age as made out in the petition. He is about 25 years of age and has received school education. The story that he was given electric shocks till he fainted is a fabrication as no such complaint was ever made to the magistrate. Further the allegation that he was drugged is also an afterthought to give a lie to his statement and to absolve the party from the charge of the commission of the dacoity. He had never complained before the magistrate that he was drugged. It is alleged in the petition under reference that the accused Chavan and Tatyia were in solitary confinement. Jaiwant pleader who is also a Communist worker of Nagpur had put up an application making this allegation before the magistrate and the matter was referred to the Superintendent District Jail, Amraoti, who denied that accused were detained in solitary cells. A copy of the reference made by the Magistrate and the reply of the Superintendent District Jail are attached.

(e) It is further alleged in the petition that some other Communist workers besides the arrested persons were detained by the police for three days. This allegation is entirely false. Some of these workers were required for interrogation and they were quite free to move about. They were not detained or wrongfully confined in any way.

(f) The last but one para in the petition gives the lie to the contents of the petition. The accused persons were discharged on the order of the Inspector-General of Police communicated by wireless on 3-5-46, a copy is attached. It was mere coincidence that the bail application before the Sessions Judge was fixed for 4th May the day on which the accused were discharged in pursuance of the orders mentioned above. It was not to ward [off] the decision of the Sessions Judge as alleged in the petition that the accused were discharged. In fact the Public Prosecutor was instructed to oppose the bail application which was to be heard by the Sessions Judge and if the orders had not been received from the Inspector-General of Police for their discharge, the bail would have been opposed.

13. I am herewith enclosing a copy of the report of CID Inspector Labhchand who has been investigating Dhangala dacoity case and against whom allegations were made by a separate application to the Provincial Government by Dr B.K. Diwanji, Present [President,] Municipal Committee, Badnera. The report contains useful details pertaining to the allegations made in the petition under reference.

14. I have no doubt that these two offences have been committed by the Communist workers who were arrested. They have connections with the Terrorist underground workers of Satara and Poona districts. The account maintained of the election expenses of Communist candidate Dighade showed that money was freely spent after the commission of these dacoities although the election campaign had started several months before. Shankerrao Dighade could not afford all the heavy expenses of the elections owing to unsatisfactory financial condition[s].

15. These allegations were for the first time started after the Communists learnt that accused Chavan had disclosed that the offence was the work of the Communist workers. If the efforts of the district police had succeeded in recovering stolen property this case would have had serious effect on the Communist party throughout India. It is for the same reason that now the Communists are trying to appear innocent by making false allegations against the police. The whole case was investigated under my direct supervision and I was constantly visiting Kotwali

and Badnera P.S.'s when the accused persons were in police custody but not a word about harassment or maltreatment was said to me by any of the accused persons.

P.C. Saksena.
Distt. Supdt. of Police,
Amraoti.

11. Communist Party Activities in the United Provinces

Extracts from Weekly Report No. 27, 5 July 1946. CID Records, Government of the United Provinces; Uttar Pradesh State Archives.

... Communists have been active in some districts of the Province. At Agra they have been agitating labour; at Aligarh they are carrying on propaganda against the British, the Congress and the Muslim League; at Cawnpore the public were little interested in their torchlight procession in the city....

12. Communist Party Activities in the United Provinces

Extracts from Weekly Report No. 29, 26 July 1946. CID Records, Government of the United Provinces; Uttar Pradesh State Archives.

... In Fyzabad, Communists are interfering in a case challenged by the police under Section 110, CrPC at Fyzabad, Jaunpur and Rae Bareilly they are agitating the Municipal sweepers. In the Rae Bareilly district the Communists held three meetings; the largest [of] which was at a fair in police circle Bachhrawan is said to have been attended by 11,000 persons....

13. Communist Party Policy Statement

Editorial, 'Communist policy for the final phase of India's freedom struggle'. *People's Age*, 18 August 1946.

The political resolution of the Central Committee of the Communist Party, which we give here, is a document which deserves the most careful attention of all fighters for freedom.

It is a statement of policy and programme for the final phase of India's freedom struggle which opened with the new round of mass battles against imperialist rulers, expressed in the RIN revolt, the unprecedented strike wave and the glorious struggle of the Kashmir people against the Princely autocracy.

It places right in the foreground this rising revolutionary upsurge of the common people of our country as the central and dominant feature of the situation in India today.

Therefore, the resolution states clearly that India is on the verge of revolution, when British Imperialism can no more rule in the old way.

But that does not mean that it is quitting by itself, or that it is going to confer freedom on India through negotiations. On the other hand, through these very negotiations, it is hatching a desperate plan to crush the mass upsurge, to create a new social base for its tottering rule, based on compromise with Princes, feudal elements and capitalists.

The resolution categorically underlines that it is the clear understanding of this central feature of the present situation which must determine the policy and strategy of the Indian people and their parties. It unmask the real nature of the Imperialist Plan and sharply criticises

the compromising and disruptive policies of the Congress and League leaderships as policies that play into imperialism's hands and give it the opportunity to see through its diabolical plan of crushing the rising revolution of the Indian people.

The resolution gives a call to all freedom loving Indians, and especially to the Left elements:

- No compromise;
- Reject the Imperialist plan;
- With the masses, to develop their struggles to new heights;
- Forge joint freedom front of the common people, uniting the main popular parties;
- Win power for the people;
- A real Constitution [Constituent?] Assembly based on adult suffrage ensuring self-determination to nationalities;
- Implement the programme of National Democratic Revolution guaranteeing land to the peasants, freedom and bread to all.

It is the draft resolution for the coming second Congress of the Communist Party which is at once a guide to action as well as a draft for discussion for all Party members. It is for them to forge out of it a weapon for the unification of all the fighting forces of our people in one mighty joint front to deliver the last smashing blow against the wretched imperialist feudal regime.

A NEW PERIOD

The Indian freedom movement has entered into its final phase. The mounting mass battles against imperialism herald a period of the struggle for power by the people and the final liquidation of imperialist rule.

This is proved by the following new unprecedented features the mass revolutionary upsurge that has gone on mounting since the 'Release INA' demonstrations and mass resistance to imperialist terror (in November 1945 and February 1946).

The masses face police and military repression with a death-defying abandon and deliver counterattacks against the police and military (Calcutta demonstration in November 1945 and February 1946).

The RIN struggle, the strike in the RIAF and other armed forces, the strikes among the police, all these show that the idea of national resistance against imperialism is maturing in the minds of the men of the Indian armed forces.

The fraternisation between the people and the army, the countrywide protest strikes in support of the RIN mutiny, the refusal of the Indian military to shoot the people and mutineers on many occasions foreshadow new forms of mass struggle.

The huge and unprecedented strike wave is already marked by total and countrywide strikes in individual industries and can develop into a general strike of all industries which can lead to all-in militant struggles locally.

The militant hunger marches of peasants and the taking possession of grain stocks of hoarders by starving peasants and the taking over of fallow lands of landlords by land hungry peasants (in certain districts of Bengal) are the beginning of new peasant struggles against landlordism which may develop into big local battles against intolerable conditions of serfdom and zamindari zuloom [injustice].

The rising political mass struggles of the States' peoples against the rule and repression of Princely autocracy, as exemplified by the epic struggle of the Kashmir people, are the beginning of a new round of States peoples' struggles to end the rule of Princes

Compromising Policy of Leadership

This upsurge, however, is taking place when the bulk of our people is divided into two hostile camps, led by the Congress and the Muslim League, which continue to have an immense hold over the people. It is because of this hold and the compromising policy pursued by both leaderships that they are in a position to retard and disorganise the growth of the revolutionary struggles.

In pursuance of their policy of compromise the Congress and League leaderships detach their following from the growing struggles, refuse to extend and support them and thus disrupt the rising wave.

In pursuance of their policy of bringing pressure on each other through reliance on imperialism, they rouse communal feelings, set their followers against each other, leading often to communal riots. They thus create disruption and demoralisation among the people at a time when the masses themselves are spontaneously uniting for common struggle.

While all sections of the common people, throughout the country and belonging to all parties, are being drawn into common battles, the sharp division and hostility between the followers of the Congress and the League, accentuated by the disruptive and compromising policies of their leaderships act as a retarding force on the spread of the common battles.

While the idea of national resistance is spreading among the ranks of the army and the police, the main weapons of imperialist rule, the leaderships of the major parties are doing their very best to check and sabotage all popular struggles.

While the question of the final ending of imperialist rule by the people taking power into their own hands comes on the agenda, the leaderships of the Congress and the League are pursuing policies of compromise with imperialism and are fighting each other and seeking British alliance against each other in the division of that power.

The leaders are able to do this because they still have immense influence as the traditional leaders of their respective organisations. This is today a big obstacle to the growth of revolutionary forces, which can only be overcome by patiently disillusioning the masses about the policy of their leaderships.

The alternatives before the people are two:

Either imperialism is able to crush this upsurge thanks to the compromising policies of the bourgeois leaderships of the Congress and the League;

Or, the Party of the working people is able so effectively to intervene in the situation with correct political slogans, programme and strategy, as to transform it continuously in the direction of developing, extending and unifying these expressions of mass discontent, counteracting the retarding influence of the bourgeois leadership, and thus setting the stage for the final struggle for power.

Slogans for a New Joint Front

The new situation demands of the Party that it boldly leads all popular struggles, develops the initiative and the fighting capacity of the masses, draws into them masses belonging to all the parties, and helps to bring into being a new joint front of the Indian people (Congress, Muslim League, Communist Party) united behind the slogans:

Quit India.

All power to the people.

Constituent Assembly based on adult franchise with proportional representation and self-determination of national units and the programme of democratic revolution.

IMPERIALIST POLICY

2. British imperialism has emerged out of the Second World War weakened internally and internationally. In its desperate struggle for survival it is trying out the dangerous strategy of building a Western Bloc, in alliance with the United States, against the Soviet Union and the forces of revolutionary democratic advance in Europe and against national liberation movements in the Middle East and Asia.

India, its biggest colonial base, occupies a key place in this strategy. But in India its very rule is endangered by the growing revolutionary upheaval. Its very machinery of power is becoming unreliable.

New British Plan and Policy

That is why the new British policy and plan to consolidate its rule in India, is to placate the bourgeois leadership—both of the Congress and the League—draw it into alliance with the Princes, and thus create a new basis for its domination and a new facade from behind which to launch a crushing offensive against the rising revolutionary forces.

The Constitution-making Body it has set up is in accordance with this plan.

If it succeeds in drawing into it the Congress, the League and the Princes, and if at all this body finishes its labours, it will produce not the constitution of an independent and democratic India but one in which British domination will be based on the hand on establishing an alliance between the Princes and patriotic parties and on the other on perpetuating the differences between these parties.

During the period in which the Constitution making Body is working, it will be an instrument of diverting the attention of the masses from the issue of the real struggle for power and of creating issues to divide Hindus and Muslims, thus encouraging communal disruption.

Essential part of this imperialist plan is an Interim Government at the Centre, which is sought to be formed by bringing in both the Congress and the League together. As conceived by imperialism, it is to be based on Congress-League conflict so that it remains permanently weak vis-a-vis imperialism—while it can be used a convenient screen and weapon to disrupt the growing national revolutionary forces.

Imperialism hopes to carry through this plan. It hopes that the Congress and League leaderships pursuing the narrow and selfish interests of their respective vested interests will seek separately compromise with imperialism and the Princes, which can only intensify their internal differences instead of solving them.

Imperialist Game can be Foiled

The neatly laid plans of imperialism which are based on the bringing together of such conflicting elements will not necessarily succeed.

The growing upsurge, if properly led and united by the Communist Party, can yet build a unity of the common people in struggle which will defeat the compromising and disruptive policies of the leaderships of the Congress and the League.

The growing support by the people of British India to the struggle of the States peoples against autocracy can yet frustrate and defeat the attempted alliance between the Princes and the Congress and League leaders.

POLICIES OF CONGRESS, LEAGUE LEADERSHIPS

3. The national bourgeois leadership of the Congress relying upon the tremendously increased mass backing and prestige it has won since 1942, is using the potential threat of struggle against the background of the new revolutionary upsurge to secure a compromise favourable to itself out of the imperialist plan.

It turns its back upon mass struggles. In return it hopes that the British will offer it favourable terms.

It uses its influence over the States people's movement to compromise with the Princes by coming out openly against States people's struggles.

It has failed to bring the common Muslims into the common movement because it has refused to recognise the right of self-determination of the people of linguistically and culturally homogenous national units as the basis of forging lasting India unity.

It rightly opposes the compulsory groupings in the imperialist plan but itself wants to take advantage of the plan to impose a compulsory union denying self-determination to nationalities.

It seeks to coerce the bourgeois feudal leadership of the Muslim League into compromise by using British pressure against the League.

Bankruptcy of the Congress

It covers up its anti-struggle, compromising and disruptive anti-Muslim policy by its demagogic pledges about Indian independence, Indian unity and democracy.

It promises that its policy will soon bring about a free Provisional Government at the Centre and an Independent India out of the present Constitution-making Body.

Exactly the opposite is going to be the outcome of its anti-struggle and compromising policy. Its bankruptcy will be revealed to its following as events unfold.

There will be deadlock after deadlock in the Constituent Assembly if and when it meets.

The Interim Government if it comes will be one of compromise which would be unable to solve the pressing problems of the people but will time, and again, be faced with the task of suppressing the people's struggles.

The Muslim League leadership enjoys the support of the bulk of the freedom loving Muslims. It has aroused and united the anti-imperialist upsurge among the Muslim masses but has misdirected the same in a separatist consolidation.

It claims to stand for the independence of India, but demands a separate Muslim State in the North-West and the North-East areas (Pakistan), containing some 40 per cent non-Muslims, without the democratic vote of the people of those areas and denying self-determination to the nationalities contained therein.

League Obstructs Building of Joint Front

It makes this undemocratic demand a condition precedent to its joining the struggle for independence, it bargains on this basis with the Congress and puts up an opposition to imperialism, but in reality it hopes to gain its demands from imperialism by obstructing the building of a joint front for freedom.

It accepted the Cabinet Mission's plan because it hoped to use compulsory groupings as a stepping stone to Pakistan and division of India with the aid of the British Imperialists.

In this its policy runs parallel to that of the Congress which has accepted the plan in order, with Britain's help, to get the compulsory union of all India and thus frustrate the plan of Pakistan.

Though it has now rejected the plan and is threatening struggle for Pakistan, it is still aiming at the same compromise with imperialism based on compulsory groupings and the Viceroy's award about the Interim Government, which denies power to the people.

As events unroll the contradictions between the democratic freedom urge of the common Muslims and the bankrupt compromising and disruptive policy of the leaders of the League will come to the fore, more and more disillusioning the Muslim masses.

Thus both the Congress and the League leaderships instead of turning to the people for a democratic decision on the question of Pakistan and the unity of India and joining hands for joint struggle against imperialism, in fact turn to imperialism for a separate compromise against each other and thus only clear the way for the success of imperialist designs.

But the imperialist plan to build a reactionary united front to the Princes and the bourgeois leadership of the Congress and the League in order to impose their constitutional scheme of division and imperialist domination will not necessarily succeed.

True, the bourgeois leadership of the Congress and the League reflecting the interests of the most powerful section of the Indian vested interests seek compromise with imperialism and want to put a brake upon the revolutionary upsurge.

But the fact is that both these leaderships are also answerable to the vast mass of the common people whose rising anti-imperialist militancy creates conditions to prevent such a compromise.

In the course of the imperialist efforts to impose the plan, acute differences will arise between imperialism and either of the leadership alternatively.

Imperialism will seek to divert each such conflict into a Congress-League deadlock, into a Hindu-Muslim problem, in order to create conditions for the imposition of its plan.

The Communist Party will utilise all such occasions, first, to expose the reactionary anti-freedom, anti-democratic and disruptive nature of the plan, and secondly, to show in every case a positive way forward based on the joint action of the Congress and the League to smash the plan and move towards a joint struggle for independence.

This perspective holds good even if an Interim Government is formed with both or with only one of the parties for even then the conflict between imperialism and the leaderships of the Congress and the League would not have been finally eliminated.

COMMUNIST PARTY AND THE IMPERIALIST PLAN

4. The Communist Party totally rejects the Imperialist Plan. It brands it as an imperialist manoeuvre to smash the growing mass upsurge, to split the freedom movement and to perpetuate imperialist feudal rule in a new form.

It exposes the proposed Constituent Assembly as a fake and not a sovereign body, an imperialist trap beset with imperialist awards, which can therefore produce only a constitution of Indian slavery and division, and nothing else.

The Party will expose it from within through its single representative from stage to stage, using every conflict which will arise therein to show its undemocratic and non-sovereign character and by bringing in positive proposals of Congress-League joint action to break it up.

The party will expose the Imperialist Plan of the Interim Government as a government of compromise and surrender to imperialism.

Such a government whether composed of one or both the major popular parties will be weak vis-a-vis the Viceroy and will be sought to be used by him as a convenient cover from behind which to hit at the growing revolutionary upsurge.

Our party will warn the parties against entering such an Interim Government.

But if it is actually formed, the Party will endeavour its utmost to prevent it from going further down the road of compromise the surrender by rallying the people in joint front demonstrations to demand of it:

Establishment of full civil liberties throughout India;

The withdrawal of British troops;

No police and military interference against workers' strikes for better wages and living conditions;

No suppression of peasant mass actions against the landlords and hoarders;

Support to mass demonstrations against imperialist rule;

Positive measures that mean war against profiteers, black marketeers and landlords.

The exposure of the bankruptcy of the Imperialist Plan as events develop would certainly lead to a growing disillusionment of the Congress and League rank and file with the Plan. But this will not lead automatically to the emergence of the joint front for united struggle for independence.

THE CENTRAL POLITICAL SLOGAN

5. In order to win the Congress, League and other parties (especially of the minorities like the Scheduled Castes, Sikhs, etc.) for a joint front for a united struggle for independence, democracy and self-determination, the Party raises the following central slogan:

“All power to the people—for a Constituent Assembly based on adult suffrage with proportional representation and complete self-determination to every national unit.”

Simultaneously, the Party places before the people a programme of democratic revolution which will guarantee freedom and liberation to all peoples, land for the peasants and jobs and decent living for all.

It will raise the slogan:

Prepare for the final struggle for power and call for a joint front of all the patriotic parties (Congress, League, Communist, etc.) for the struggle.

KEY SIGNIFICANCE OF SELF-DETERMINATION

6. The significance of the principle of self-determination of nationalities in our programme of democratic revolution must be clearly understood especially for building Hindu-Muslim unity in the struggle for independence and power, and to counteract the disruption caused by the policies of the Congress and League leaderships.

Self-determination of nationalities is not just a question of whether a national unit separates or not. On the other hand, it is a great revolutionary unifying principle, which guarantees real freedom and democracy to the people of each nationality in Independent India.

Self-determination of nationalities means the bringing together of the common people of the same nationality, Hindu and Muslims, to fight against imperialist-feudal regime, against Princely autocracy and landlordism.

Self-determination of nationalities means the bringing together of the common people of all nationalities in the common struggle for independence from British imperialism for that is the precondition for winning self-determination.

Self-determination of nationalities means the unity of the nationalities in India to form a voluntary Union to build common economic life and people's well-being on the foundation of equality, freedom and democracy.

The Communist Party fights to build Hindu-Muslim unity by bringing the Hindu and Muslim workers and peasants together in their common class organisations to fight for their living conditions and by fighting for self-determination of nationalities.

The Communist Party exposes the policy of the Congress leadership denying the right of self-determination to nationalities as undemocratic.

That policy reflects the urge of Indian big business to compromise with imperialism in order to inherit from it the monopolist grip over the economic and political life of entire India thus denying to the peoples of different nationalities the right to shape freely their own life and to build a really free and voluntary Indian Union.

It is a policy of compromise with the Princes, of denying self-determination to the people of States, which frustrates the natural desire of the peoples of different provinces and states belonging to the same nationalities to reunite in single national units, and thus to end the artificial and arbitrary partition of India imposed by imperialism.

At the same time the Communist Party releases that the ordinary Congressman and masses following the Congress rightly oppose the partition of India on a religious and undemocratic basis and correctly desire a single Union of democratic and free India in which the people of every nationality would be autonomous.

The Party will make every effort to show them how the acceptance by the Congress of the right of self-determination of nationalities to the point of secession is essential to convince the common Muslims that the Union would be voluntary and for mutual good and that peoples of linguistically culturally homogenous units would be free to shape their own destiny, thus creating the basis for a Congress-League joint front for common assault on imperialism.

Similarly the Party will popularise the consistent application of self-determination to the States under the slogan, "End of Princely Autocracy", so that the struggle of the States peoples opens the way to their freedom and to their reunion with their brothers of the same nationality.

The Party's Stand in Regard to Muslims

The Communist Party will expose the undemocratic demand of the Muslim League and a separate Muslim State in the six Provinces, without reference to the people, and denying self-determination to the people of the nationalities in that area, as reflecting the policy of the Muslim bourgeois feudal vested interests who are seeking a compromise with imperialism for a share of administration in a divided India.

The Communist Party realises that the bulk of the Muslim people see in the demand for Pakistan the demand for their freedom and look upon the Muslim League as the leader of their fight for the freedom of the Muslims in an independent India.

The Party will appeal to the burning anti-imperialism of the Muslim masses to make them see that neither freedom nor democracy of the common Muslims can be won until they make their organisation to join the common struggle for independence, without making the acceptance of Pakistan a precondition, but by agreeing that the question shall be decided by the democratic vote of the people on the basis of self-determination of national units—without the intervention of the foreign power.

The Communist Party will seek every opportunity to bring the Muslim masses into common anti-imperialist demonstrations.

The Party must make special efforts to bring the Muslim workers and peasants into the common class organisations and into the struggles for their demands and thus forge Hindu-

Muslim unity of the toilers as an unbreakable weapon, which will finally defeat the disruptive policies of the-bourgeois leaderships of the Congress and the League.

Only the policy of National Self-determination will ensure freedom, democracy and independence to all peoples including the common Muslims and will be the basis for building the joint front for the struggle for winning an independent Indian Union, guaranteeing full and free development to the peoples of all nationalities.

Programme of Democratic Revolution

The central slogan of a Constituent Assembly based on adult suffrage is indissolubly linked with the preparation for the struggle for power and with the strategy of the united front of the Congress, the League and the Communist Party.

First, the Constituent Assembly visualised is quite distinct from the one proposed by imperialism and comes into being in the free atmosphere of a successful struggle by the people and transacts its business without the intervention of imperialism.

Secondly, it is based on the great principle of self-determination of nationalities, which will ensure that the Constituent Assembly will be the assembly of the delegates of all those national units (redemarcated linguistic culturally homogeneous territories) which wish to join to form a single Union State.

It would be free to any national unit in India not to send its delegates to the common Constituent Assembly, but to form its separate sovereign State if a plebiscite of the entire adult population of that unit results in a vote for separation.

This would enable the question of Pakistan and unity of India to be decided by the democratic vote of the people. At the same time it would guarantee equality and freedom to the people of every nationality which joins the voluntary Indian Union.

Such a clear-cut definition of the Constituent Assembly would afford a just and democratic basis for achieving the joint front for the final struggle for power.

Thirdly, it is based on the most democratic principle of election, viz., on adult suffrage with proportional representation, which will not only ensure that instead of vested interests it is the voice of the toiling masses which will predominate, but will also guarantee that minorities get just representation.

One main items of the programme of democratic revolution are as follows:

Abolition of Princely Autocracy

Abolition of Princely autocracy in the Indian States.

Complete self-determination to the peoples of the "Native States" through a Constituent Assembly based on adult suffrage to decide the question of the future status of the Ruler and to establish the sovereignty of the people.

It will also decide whether a part or the whole of the territory is to be rejoined with the adjoining Province inhabited by the same nationality.

This would not only mean the end of autocracy in the 524 Indian States but also the reunion of the people of single nationalities in consolidated national territorial units, which are at present cut up into different Provinces and States by the artificial boundaries imposed by imperialism.

Abolition of landlordism without compensation, and land to the tiller.

Confiscation of all British capital in India and nationalisation of all key industries, big plantations, mines, and means of transport and communication.

Rights of Workers and Minorities

Fundamental rights of workers—

An 8-hour day;

A 40-hour week;

Social legislation, guaranteeing living wage and security against unemployment, sickness and old age;

Free compulsory education;

Decent housing at Government and capitalists' expense;

Free provision for health;

Right to work;

Right to organise;

Trade union recognition and right to strike;

Equal pay for equal work;

Adequate maternity benefit;

Abolition of forced labour.

All interspersed minorities in the new national units formed will have the rights regarding their language, education and culture guaranteed by statute and their infringement would be punishable by law. All disabilities, privileges and discrimination based on caste, race or community (such as untouchability) would be abolished statute and their infringement would be punishable by law.

Government of Free India shall immediately undertake a programme specially designed to speed up the advancement of all backward communities and tribes, in economic welfare, education and culture, so as to rapidly bring them to the level of the rest of the population.

STRATEGY OF JOINT FREEDOM FRONT

7. The Communist Party realises that the present revolutionary upsurge can be developed into the all-in final struggle for power and the carrying through of the democratic revolution only when the majority of our people are rallied for the revolution.

The National Congress represents the mainstream of the independence movement of the country.

The Muslim League has behind it the bulk of the anti-imperialist freedom-loving Muslim masses.

And the Communist Party leads the bulk of the organised workers and peasants.

A joint front of the three main patriotic parties Congress, League, Communist Party and other popular patriotic parties is thus essential for developing such a final struggle and guaranteeing its success.

To build such a front is the key task of the period. Failure to achieve it will lead to the petering out of the revolutionary upsurge, ending in demoralisation and disruption.

The Communist Party, therefore, measures its success in partial struggles also by how far these struggles teach the Congress and League masses to reject the compromising policies of their leaderships and to work for the common aim, by bringing pressure on their own leaderships to build a joint front.

The Party seeks to achieve this by boldly leading partial struggles and uniting all sections through them, by exposing the compromising policy of the two leaderships and by popularising and appealing for a joint front.

The Party realises that the visible demonstration of joint front in every local and partial struggle is the most powerful appeal for building it on a national scale and hence the Party tirelessly works for it in every struggle.

In directing the struggles, in its agitation and propaganda, while the Party ruthlessly exposes the policy of division and hostility pursued by Congress-League leaderships towards each other, while it fights against their plans of compromise, at each stage it advances such slogans, gives such directives as will accentuate the process of disillusionment with the compromising policies of the leaderships, and thus enable the masses under the influence of these two organisations to take the next step forward.

The Party has no illusions that the joint front can be built by merely appealing to the bourgeois leaderships. The joint front will be achieved by making the masses move for it in spite of the leadership.

It is built in the measure that the Party is able to establish and extend its political leadership in the ever-widening sweep of common mass struggles, in the measure that the Party is able to disillusion the masses about the sectarian, disruptive and compromising policy of the leaderships, and rouse in them the will to fight against the British Imperialist Plan and for the realisation of the essential tasks of the programme of National Democratic Revolution.

Left Joint Action

The radicalisation of the Congress ranks and the growing disillusionment with the compromising policy of the Congress Right leadership is seen in the enormous growth of Left elements who honestly want to fight compromise and stand for struggle. Quite a large number of these are being attracted to Marxism.

From the ranks of the Left elements comes the proposal for Left unity which expresses the desire for a common front of action of Left elements, including the Communist Party, against the compromise that is being hatched.

The Communist Party attaches great importance to the proposal because it displays that Left elements are getting disillusioned about the Right wing bourgeois leadership and because they are also releasing themselves from the grip of disruptive anti-Communist propaganda.

In the conditions of today when both sets of leaderships are pursuing a path of compromise, it is essential that all Left elements who are opposed to the Imperialist Plan must come together to rouse the people to the danger ahead.

Basis for Left Joint Action

The Communist Party appreciates the desire of Left elements to bring about the joint action of all those who want to fight compromise and proposes that the basis for joint action should be as follows:

Support to all partial struggles of workers, peasants, employees and students.

Support to States people's struggles.

Reject the Imperialist Plan.

Forward to the joint struggle of the Indian people for power.

The central slogan of rallying the entire people for the joint front must be **Constituent Assembly based on adult suffrage with proportional representation and self-determination of nationalities.**

The Communist Party knows that the main Left parties do not yet accept the slogan of self-determination of nationalities. The Communist Party is, however, prepared to have joint action with the Left elements on any one or all of the above points.

At the same time the Party will continue to persuade them to join hands with it in campaigning for self-determination for nationalities, for this is the only democratic basis on which the unity of Hindu and Muslim masses can be forged for the final struggle.

The Communist Party makes this proposal for joint action because it wants all those who today fight compromise to join hands to rouse the entire people against the Imperialist Plan and speed up the building of a joint freedom front that will rally the entire Indian people and unite their major parties for the final struggle for power and independence.

But the policies pursued by the leaderships of the Congress Socialist Party (CSP) and the Forward Bloc [FB] constitute today the main obstacle for the realisation of such joint action.

Disruptive Policies of CSP, FB Leaderships

The CSP as well as the Forward Bloc leadership, though it talks of resisting the Imperialist Plan, in practice follows the plans of the Right.

They outbid the Right in its anti-Communism and thus help the compromising bourgeoisie to split the forces of anti-compromise.

They join hands with the Congress leadership in starting rival unions, which oppose strikes, and thus help the Right to disrupt the growing struggles of the working-class.

They take an opportunist attitude towards strikes and hinder the growth of mass action.

On the working-class front, their aim is not so much to rally the workers against the capitalists, against compromise, but to join hands with all to fight the Communists.

They follow the same policy on the kisan front.

This policy thus disrupts the growing struggles of the people and disorganises the struggle against the new Imperialist Plan.

On the vital question of national unity also the leaderships of both the CSP and the Forward Bloc follow in the wake of the compromising bourgeois leadership and deny self-determination to the national units. They denounce the League as pro-imperialist and will have nothing to do with it. Here again, their policy disrupts the joint front, makes joint struggle impossible and strengthens the hands of the compromisers and British imperialism.

While both the leaderships of the CSP and the Forward Bloc claim allegiance to the principles of Socialism, their anti-Communism leads them to the open support of the rival trade unions of the bourgeois leadership and to splitting of the unity of the working-class.

In their international policy, they follow in the wake of the agents of British imperialism and international reaction in their denunciation of the Soviet Union and of the achievements of revolutionary democracy in the countries of Eastern Europe and Asia.

The Left elements must see the wide gap that separates the outlook of the CSP and Forward Bloc leaderships and their own aspirations to fight compromise. So long as that outlook persists, joint action as proposed by us will be rendered difficult.

Nonetheless, the Communist Party puts forward this proposal for joint action before the Left parties and all Left elements opposed to compromise, because such action will facilitate the task of rallying the entire people for the defeat of the British plan and for the final struggle for power.

At the same time the Party wants to make it quite clear that compromise cannot be fought by formation of a bloc of Left parties.

Such a bloc, on the other hand, would be a definite hindrance in the path of rallying the entire Congress for the policy of the joint front.

It would lead to the illusion that the Right-wing leadership can be replaced by the factional manoeuvres of the Left bloc within the Congress.

This, again, would lead to the underestimation of the role of the independent working-class and peasant movements and of the Communist Party in the task of winning the masses for the programme of democratic revolution and joint front.

It is for joint action to fulfil these tasks that we invite all Left elements for that is how the fight against compromise can be led forward.

Left in Muslim League

The Communist Party realises that the position of the Left inside the Muslim League is very weak. There is, of course, a rapidly growing number of consistent anti-imperialists who are dissatisfied with the feudal-bourgeois compromising leadership of the League and want to lead the Muslim masses in the fight against British imperialism.

But these Left elements within the League cannot make headway against the compromising policy of the bourgeois-feudal leadership of the League unless they accept and popularise the following principles and policies as the rallying slogans of the Muslim masses.

The policy of the leadership of relying upon imperialism and of bargaining with the Congress leadership for gaining the Muslim demands, is totally abandoned and repudiated. The question of Pakistan and unity of India must be decided by the democratic vote of the people on the basis of self-determination of nationalities without the intervention of British imperialists.

The League joins in the struggle for independence, withdrawal of British troops and the end of Princely autocracy unconditionally.

The League supports all common struggles of workers and peasants for their basic demands and helps and strengthens the common class organisations—trade unions and kisan sabhas.

The Muslim peasantry of Bengal, the Punjab and Sind are helped in particular in the common struggle against landlordism.

The Communist Party believes that the Left in the Muslim League would, through its own experience, realise that only activity and development on the above lines will bring the Muslim masses into common struggles and pave the way for a Congress-League joint front, for the common struggle for power, for the freedom of all Indians, and for securing all the just demands of Indian Muslims.

LEADERSHIP OF MASS ACTIONS

8. The main lever of the Party for preparing for the struggle for power, for strengthening the Party and mass organisations, for bringing the Party forward as the builder of joint front struggles on all sectors, counteracting the disruptive influence of the bourgeois leadership, is the correct developing of struggles of the working-class, peasantry and States peoples, and the advancing of correct slogans for these struggles.

The leaderships of both the Congress and the League either sabotage these struggles or disrupt them from within. In either case their policy leads to division of the masses.

The Communist Party by giving bold and militant leadership to the mass struggle counteracts disruption and builds unity.

The Strike Strategy for Today

Strike strategy today is determined by the new situation on the working-class front. Under the present worsening conditions of life and labour and of great and spontaneous political awareness among the working-class all over the country, even a spontaneous local strike gets the support of the other workers and the common people, and thus tends to develop into a battle of the local toiling and common people against the vested interests and bureaucracy.

Workers, fight the strikes today with such totality of united support and such abandon as have not been seen before.

This spirit of organisation, class solidarity, and determined and united fight for decent wage and living conditions has spread to all sections of workers including bank employees, clerks, primary teachers, police and Government employees.

The tremendous response to the preparation of the all-India railway general strike, as well as the experience of the all-India postal strike prove this.

Growing Class-solidarity among Workers

Further the readiness with which the workers come out on sympathetic strikes (e.g., to support postal strike) and respond to the call of political protest strikes (e.g., RIN and arrest of Pandit Nehru in Kashmir) is a proof of the tremendous spontaneous growth of their class solidarity and political awareness.

The Party has been lagging behind this spontaneous development and has hesitated to give a bold and courageous lead to develop the spontaneous strike wave.

The Communist Party, recognises that the situation is rapidly leading to general strikes in industrial centres in whole industries and seeks to lead them, developing the militant initiative of the working-class to resist their suppression.

The Party realises that an all-in strike action of all industries for basic demands will bring the working-class activity to the highest pitch and unite the entire class to the common fight.

The Party organises political protest strikes against repression and in support of the States people's struggles, etc., and prepares the working-class for the political general strike as part of the popular struggle for power.

In organising and leading the strike wave from stage to stage in this way, the Party must actively build mass unions and extend and consolidate the base of the Party among the workers. This will end the influence of the bourgeoisie over the working-class and consolidate the main fighting force of the Indian people in the final phase of the Indian Revolution.

Kisan Struggles—New Direction

The peasantry is lagging behind the working-class in this phase of mass upheavals. But even the peasantry is beginning to take to militant actions against landlords, hoarders, moneylenders, etc., as has been shown in Midnapore, Basti, etc.

Such mass actions of the kisans are bound to grow in militancy. The very intensity of food crisis, the shortage and high prices of essential commodities, official atrocities in the villages and landlord oppression will force them to take to more and more militant actions.

The Communist Party supports these mass actions and will organise the kisans to withstand the severe repression that they will have to face; it will mobilise the non-kisan elements in the villages and in towns in support of these kisan struggles and help to link up the kisan, working-class and other people's struggles; it will do its best to make the Kisan Sabha a powerful instrument against the Imperialist Plan and for building free, democratic villages.

Party will Back Resistance to Anti-Kisan Measures

Thus, while demanding that prompt agrarian legislation be enacted by the Ministries, the Party will support peasants' resistance to eviction, peasant initiative to get landlords' fallow lands for cultivation, no-rent struggles when the peasant cannot pay the rent, etc.

While supporting every measure of equitable distribution of food, just procurement and rationing, and while using Food Committees, Cooperative Societies, Local Self-government institutions, etc., to make them of utmost use to the people, the Party will support resistance to unjust anti-kisan measures like excessive procurement from poor peasants.

In areas where people are starving, it will demand that the hoarders' and Government's stocks be handed over to the people for distribution.

While agitating for legislative and administrative action for irrigation facilities, seeds, manure, etc., the Party will also support kisans' initiative in getting possession of and in using sources of irrigation owned by the landlords and the Government and stocks of seed, manure, etc., owned by hoarders.

In leading and organising the kisan struggles the Party will see to it that the edge of these struggles is directed against landlords, usurers and bureaucracy, and that they bring about the greatest possible unity of the village people against the enemies of the people.

Wherever possible the Party must organise fraternal solidarity actions between workers and peasants in localities, peasants supporting workers with grain donations, workers supporting kisan actions by strikes, etc.

States People's Struggles

Despite the anti-struggle policy of the dominant leadership of the Praja Mandal[s] and even the sabotaging endeavours of the Congress High Command from outside, spontaneous struggles are breaking out in the Indian States.

Great dissatisfaction prevails in the ranks of the Praja Mandals over the compromising policy of their leaderships and over the moves of the Congress High Command to negotiate with the Princes, while simultaneously forcing the All India States People's Conference itself to lower its demands.

The central slogan which the Communists must raise and popularise within and without the Praja Mandals and among the masses is:

"Quit Autocracy"—Constituent Assembly for each State based on adult suffrage to decide the future of the Ruler, the constitution of the State, and the question of its union with India.

It is wrong to consider that this slogan would isolate us from the Praja Mandals. On the other hand refusal to popularise this slogan among the middle leaders and rank and file of the Praja Mandals, and among the masses through our independent kisan and working-class work, will be refusal to fight compromise with imperialism and with the Imperialist Plan.

The Communists in the States must raise a broad-based movement for civil liberties, agitate against the bogus constitutions which the Princes are foisting upon the people; protest against any nominated representative being sent even to this Constitution-making Body, raise the demand for a Constituent Assembly for each State based on adult suffrage to frame the Constitution of the State and to join in the real all-India Constituent Assembly.

The Communists in the States must concentrate their main attention on organising the struggle of workers and peasants for their urgent demands and for the civil liberties of the people and develop a joint front with the local Praja Mandals and other popular organisations.

It is through these struggles and by popularising the central political slogan among the masses, participating and supporting them, that we win over the rank and file and middle cadre of the Praja Mandal[s] to these slogans.

Our aim is to remove the stranglehold of the compromising leadership of the Praja Mandal[s] and to create conditions for the launching of broad-based struggles in every State as in Kashmir.

Students' Unity and Struggle

Students took the initiative on an India-wide scale in the first postwar demonstrations for the release of the men of the INA and in solidarity with the naval mutiny.

Even young school students and girl students have displayed unprecedented mass heroism in clashes with the imperialist police and military. Hindu and Muslim students ranged behind the Students' Congress, the Students' Federation and the Muslim Students' Federation fought side by side in these great actions.

For the first time in our history, mass labour-student solidarity is being built up through students' strikes of solidarity with working-class struggles. Side by side with this, the mass of students are increasingly taking up the fight to solve the burning problems of students' life and education.

The Communist Party welcomes this unity in action of our fighting youth. It welcomes united political strikes by students, and strikes and demonstrations of solidarity with workers', peasants' and States people's struggles.

It attaches great importance to mass fraternisation between workers, peasants and students which heightens revolutionary consciousness and opens a new chapter in our national movement.

The Communist Party firmly believes that the intolerably restricted facilities for education and for a full cultural and social development; reactionary, outmoded and often anti-national teaching in schools and colleges; and the prospects of unemployment facing every educated youth have made the crisis in students' life so acute that only militant mass action can bring about any real change.

The Communist Party, therefore, supports the mass students' struggle for a better education with the following main slogans:

Democratise our educational system! Ban anti-national imperialist indoctrination in schools and colleges in any form!

Immediate expansion of both college and school education—with adequate wages and decent living conditions for teachers—for speedy advance to universal education and to provide trained cadre for national reconstruction.

Immediate steps must be taken to bring education within the reach of all with special facilities in the shape of grants and scholarships, etc., provided to poor students drawn from backward communities and nationalities.

Guaranteed employment for all educated youth.

ROLE OF THE PARTY

9. A mighty historical responsibility rests on the shoulders of the Party and its 50,000 members. The revolutionary phase into which India's freedom struggle has entered demands of them that they throw in every ounce of their strength to ensure that imperialism's evil plan of crushing the Indian Revolution is frustrated and instead the mighty postwar revolutionary upsurge is led forward to forge the joint freedom front of the Indian people for the decisive struggle for power.

First and foremost, the Party must prove and improve its capacity of leadership of mass struggles, developing in them to the fullest the fighting initiative of the masses while maintaining the unity of the mass[es]. It must use these struggles to build united mass organisations—TU's and Kisan Sabha Units, defeating the moves of the disrupters.

Secondly, the Party must make special effort to draw inside the Party hundreds and thousands of politically awakened militant fighters from all sections of the masses, but especially from workers and peasants, who participate in these struggles and to transform the Party into a mass party of the working people.

Thirdly, the Party must come forward as the political leader of the masses—making mass political education of the fighting masses, especially round the central political slogan and the programme of democratic revolution, its key job. (Mass pamphlets for all sections of the people on the burning problems of the day).

Fourthly, the Party must undertake the mass political education of the entire Party membership, in the programme and policy of the Party, in the basic principles of Marxism and Leninism, in the practical organisational work in the mass organisations and in the Party organisations, through graded schools for different strata of Party members.

To the extent the Party fulfills these organisational tasks, to that extent it would be able to come forward as the organiser of this new phase of the Indian Revolution and lead it to victory.

14. Communists Criticise Repression of Strikes and Popular Unrest

Editorial, 'Repression under Congress ministries'. *People's Age*, 8 September 1946.

The story of the measures taken by the Congress Ministries to deal with the demands of labour and the strike struggles arising out of them reveals a ghastly tale of brutal suppression of strikes, civil liberties, denial of just rights, and open help to the vested interests to crush working-class resistance.

The Congress Ministries opened their regimes with warnings against 'illegal' strikes and with wordy assurances to workers about their good intentions in future. But the real face of their policy was clearly seen within a fortnight of their assumption of power.

In the Province of Bombay, they started with resorting to Section 144 in almost every strike, even when it was legal and satisfied even the meticulous requirements of the Bombay Industrial Disputes Act.

The culmination of this policy was reached in the ghastly and vindictive massacre of Amalner, a small industrial town in East Khandesh district. At Amalner the workers were forced to come on strike and fight the victimisation of one of the workers.

The strike was legal and was resorted to after the conciliation procedure, laid down under the Bombay Industrial Disputes Act passed by the last Ministry, had been gone through. And yet on the next day of the strike the district authorities proclaimed Section 144 prohibiting all meetings.

The Tragedy of Amalner

The Home Minister refused to withdraw Section 144 and the Labour Minister declined to intervene. The workers, therefore, decided to hold a peaceful protest meeting against the promulgation of Section 144.

It was against this peaceful protest meeting that the local D.S.P. and his policemen opened fire killing nine and wounding more than sixty.

Nine killed and over sixty wounded, many of whom permanently disabled and deprived of the use of their limbs –this is the brutal record of the Ministerial regime in Amalner. It beats the record of the bureaucracy under the old regime who dared not shoot down so many workers even in a big general strike.

In the Province of Madras, the Prakasam Ministry pursues the same policy.

The most egregious display of brute force against the workers is seen in connection with the big South Indian Railway workers' strike.

Forty thousand workers are on strike. They are fighting a just battle against victimisation and treacherous attack by the White administration of the Railway Board. The workers are asking only for restoration of status quo and fighting against withdrawal of rights previously won.

Yet the Prakasam Ministry has lent its full support to the White boss of the SIR, Mr Reynolds, and given free license to the police to crush the strike. The notorious Malabar Special Police has been drafted to suppress the workers.

In Madura and other places the police go into workers' chawls and intimidate the women workers to send [send] their husbands to work.

The hated Section 144, prohibiting all meetings, is applied almost everywhere. There have been several lathi-charges, and according to the statement of the Union leaders no fewer than 200 have been injured and 160 arrested within the first week of the strike.

Lathi-charges, hundreds of arrests, Section 144, and terrorisation against workers conducting a peaceful and legal strike– this is the manner in which the Prakasam Ministry apes the old bureaucratic regime.

For Whose Freedom?

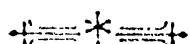
The time has come for the ordinary Congressman to ask the question for whose freedom has he been fighting? For whose rights and democracy has he borne jail, lathi-charges and firing? Has he done it to 't loose the bureaucracy on the workers, and perpetuate the old reign of hunger or to install the people in power and release them from the grip of hunger and starvation?

For let there be no doubt that imperialism is pretending to sue for peace and transfer power, precisely for the reason that it wants the help of the upper classes and the Congress leaders against the mass discontent which is growing from below. It expects the Interim Government and the Ministries to do its job of suppressing it.

Let no Congressman allow himself to be deluded by the cry of fighting the Communists. That cry today is one of fighting the rising forces of workers and peasants, of the people themselves, of the very people which made the Congress great.

That is why this policy represents a menace to the country's freedom and it is the business of every man to fight it and compel the Ministries to change their course. The united pressure of the working-class and the people must rescue the Ministries from the clutches of the vested interests who are striking a deal with British imperialism by working out the Cabinet Mission proposals.

For the workers the lesson is obvious. They will be called upon to fight bitter struggles against slander, against repression, against terror. The Communist Party will never let down the workers and the more courageously they fight for their demands the more quickly will their oppressors be defeated.



15. Communists Shore Up Election Prospects in the Central Provinces and Berar

Extracts from a note prepared by the Political and Military Department, Government of the Central Provinces and Berar; 13 September 1946. File No. 72; Political and Military Department, Government of the Central Provinces and Berar (1946); Madhya Pradesh State Archives.

A General Note on Communist Activities in the Province During 1942-46

9. The year 1946 was eventful in that the Communists did everything in their power to gain their waning prestige. In February Communists condemned the wanton destruction of the CPI HQs by Congress followers and asked Kisans to support their candidates in the elections. A special appeal was also made for the assistance of Muslim League voters in return for the support given to the Pakistan demand. They took up the cause of the AI Postal and RMS Union, the threatened Rly strike, the conviction of Abdul Rashid of the INA, suppression of the RIN mutineers, the arrest of Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru in Kashmir and the strike in the ISC [Indian Signal Corp] at Jubbulpore. A strike of the PWD workers and Rickshaw pullers was organised to observe RIN Ratings Day. At meetings at Nagpur, Hoshangabad and Amraoti districts Government was accused of deliberately creating a famine and protests were raised about the cut in rations. Congress was criticised for its willingness to cooperate with Government in tackling the food problem. At a Ramayan recital, on 23-5-46, Kranti Kumar advocated winning over the confidence of the military and police. Three members of a dramatic party from Bombay brought for purposes of election propaganda were identified as being concerned in an armed dacoity with murder at Dadhi, District Amraoti and were arrested along with eight others u/s 55 CrPC but were later discharged. During a visit to Nagpur in April, all India leaders of the party criticised Congress for not converting the unrest in the police and armed forces to their advantage and for consenting to negotiate with the Cabinet Mission which was described as a farce. Jaideo Kapur a terrorist and associate of Bhagat Singh averred that the time was ripe for an all-out offensive against imperialism. The threatened Railway strike in June engaged the attention of the party which if successful was expected to greatly strengthen their position and compel the various parties to submit to a workers' rule. Railway employees at Wardha and Jubbulpore were incited to vote for a strike. Communists at Nagpur, Jubbulpore, Raipur and Akola actively stirred up agitation among the lower grade postal staff and employees of the Posts and Telegraph Workshops and the party as a whole was primarily responsible for the strike. In August they diverted their attention to the PWD workers and Government peons and demanded the cancellation of the Trade Disputes Act. The CPT Transport workers and the strike in the military accounts at Jubbulpore were not overlooked. They were also in favour of supporting the AISC [All India Scheduled Castes' Federation] in its satyagraha during the Assembly sessions in September. A cell was also introduced into the local Muslim League for fomenting agitation in the event of trouble during "Direct Action Day". On receipt of information that the alliance with the Muslim League and AISC was for the purpose of embarrassing Government and creating communal disharmony and unrest, searches of the communes and the more prominent Communists were ordered on 1-9-46, but nothing incriminating was found. These searches evoked several protest meetings at which Government was upbraided for resorting to measures reminiscent [reminiscent] of the old bureaucratic

regime and Congress reminded of its obligation according to its election manifesto to set up a Kisan-Mazdur rule which Congress Ministries were interpreting by curtailing and violating civil liberties and firing on workers. From the 6th to 18th September they organised a strike among Govt. Press employees at Nagpur resulting in the arrest of Om Prakash Mehta. Principally at Nagpur and Jubbulpore Communists carried on their disruptive role relentlessly and identified themselves with all labour unrest notably amongst municipal sweepers, Improvement Trust employees, dyers, bidi workers, Government peons and other menial staff, primary school teachers, transport workers and employees of the Jubbulpore Electric Supply Co. At a meeting of 150 Kisans held at Katol (Nagpur) Communist speakers tendered dangerous advice. They advocated taking forcible possession of lands surrendered in payment of debt and pointed out that the strength of the police force was inadequate to deal with a countrywide Kisan agitation.

For information,
Illegible
13/9.

N.B.: I think we should take strong measures. Keep in Communist file.

Illegible.
15/9.

16. Police Raid on Communist Party Offices in Calcutta

News report, 'Police swoop on Calcutta communist office'. *Free Press Journal*, 17 September 1946.

Calcutta, September 16. The special branch of the Calcutta Police raided the Bengal Provincial Headquarters of the Communist Party of India and the office of its newspaper *Swadhinatha* this morning, according to an announcement by the Communist Party headquarters. An extensive search was carried out.

"The Police literally ransacked the office, broke open the desk of the Chairman of the Editorial Board, and took away a large number of manuscript articles and stories intended for publication in the paper and its Puja special," says the announcement.

"A number of circulars of the party and other literature were also seized.

"Information has reached the party headquarters that the District Party Officers of Calcutta, Howrah and 24 Parganas were also searched this morning and the Howrah Party Secretary was called to the Intelligence Branch Office for interrogation."

"Offending" News Item

Mr Bhowani Sen, Secretary, Bengal Provincial Committee of the Communist Party of India, says:

"The Special Branch of the Calcutta Police searched the office of our Provincial Committee and also the offices of several District Committees today in connection with a news item published in *Swadhinatha*. Though the warrant specifically authorised the police to seize only documents concerned with the said news item, the raiding party, headed by the Deputy Commissioner of Special Branch, wantonly seized documents, minutes and books by no means connected with that news. For example, books and documents concerning famine have also been seized."

The news item for which the search was organised referred to a secret circular by the Eastern Army Commander Lt-General Bucher, says Mr Sen.

It continues: "The Deputy Commissioner must explain on what authority he seizes books and documents relating to famine and civil supply and similar matters.

Illegal

"The wanton seizure of documents is illegal and unjust. The police authorities must know that no harassment can prevent us from exposing the Government or any of its Department[s] hatching conspiracies against our people's interests from behind the screen."—API.

17. Communists Use Aggressive Tactics in the United Provinces

Extracts from Weekly Report No. 37, 20 September 1946. CID Records, Government of the United Provinces; Uttar Pradesh State Archives.

... In Cawnpore, Communists have been increasingly aggressive and violent both in their action and speech. These activities which led to several clashes, had to be checked by the arrest of Communist leaders; many others went underground. In this district the Communists have also indirectly tried to incite the police by stating at their labour meetings, that the wages of the police which are less than those of the labourers are scandalously low. At Bahraich, where they described the Hon'ble Jawaharlal Nehru as a slave of the British Government, they urged the kisans and mazdoors to come under the Red Flag....

18. Disruption in the Central Provinces and Berar

Extracts from Police Abstract of Intelligence, Vol. LXI, No. 39; Nagpur, 28 September 1946. File No. 72/1946; Political and Military Department, Government of the Central Provinces and Berar (1946); Madhya Pradesh State Archives.

Communism

552. Communist continued their disruptive role at Nagpur, Jubbulpore, Raipur and Akola. On the 28th September they organised a one-day strike of Improvement Trust employees at Nagpur but attempts to hold meetings of these employees fizzled out on account of meagre attendance. At a public meeting of 700 held at Nagpur on the 23 September, O.P. Mehta and D.R. Jayant criticised the Congress Ministry for ignoring the demands of peons whom they warned to beware of attempts to break up their solidarity. At a meeting of 150 held at Katol (Nagpur) on the 22nd September, a speaker advocated taking forcible possession of land surrendered to moneylenders in payment of debt and said that the present strength of the police would not be sufficient to cope with a countrywide kisan movement. At Jubbulpore they concentrated on Municipal sweepers and the employees of the Electric Supply Company and urged them to be prepared to strike if their demands were not met. A procession of 100 rickshaw drivers was taken out at Raipur on the 24th to protest against police prosecutions and inadequacy of wages. Laxminarayan alias Lachoo Kaptan was the main speaker at a public meeting of 100, mostly sweepers, held at Harda (Hoshangabad) on the 20th September. He criticised the popular ministries for the pro-capitalist tendencies and for their antagonism towards Communists and pointed out that the presence of British troops in India reduced the status of the Interim Government, sponsored by Congress, to that of a puppet Government. On the

22nd September, a private meeting was held at Amraoti at which Government's attitude towards the Communist Party was criticised, N.T. Rajderkar was deputed to explain the party's policy to the Labour Minister and workers cautioned not to give Government grounds to declare the party illegal. On the 27th September, a public meeting of 500 was held at Akola to sympathise with Municipal employees on strike. Speakers supported the demands of strikers and undertook to get textile workers to strike in sympathy.

19. Madras Government Measures to Check Communist Influence

News report, 'Security demanded from Janashakti press'. *Free Press Journal*, 18 October 1946.

Madras, October 17. The Madras Government, it is believed, has decided to take stringent measures to check Communist activities in the province.

A notice has been served on Mr P. Ramamurthi, keeper of the Janashakti Press, organ of the Communist Party in Tamilnad, asking him to show cause why security should not be demanded from him under the Indian Press Emergency Act 7 for having printed and published in August last pamphlets entitled "Police Devil Dances", "Police Repression" and "Prakasam Police Atrocities". These pamphlets were published in connection with the City conservancy strike.

Another notice has been served on Mr T. Ganesan, a leading Member of the Communist Party, asking him to show cause why action should not be taken against him for having used a loudspeaker at a public meeting on the 'Anti-Black Market Day' last week.

A message from Madanapalle says that Mr V. Kurmayya, Minister for Information has formulated a scheme to counteract Communist propaganda in the Presidency. Under the scheme every District will have four counter-propaganda officers.

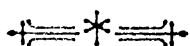
It may be recalled that Premier Prakasam speaking at Calicut on Monday last said that the Government was bound to check Communists' activities which he added "were undesirable".

20. Communists to be Rounded Up in the CP and Berar

Telegram by the Under Secretary, Political and Military Department, to all Deputy Commissioners, Commissioners, and the Inspector General of Police, Central Provinces and Berar: Nagpur, 16 November 1946. File No. 3-A/1947; Political and Military Department, Government of the Central Provinces and Berar (1946); Madhya Pradesh State Archives.

It is proposed to round up the Communists under the Maintenance of Public Order Act (Stop) Please report without delay the names of the more active Communists giving reasons justifying the action proposed.

CP



21. Justification for Rounding Up Communists in the CP and Berar

Memorandum by the District Magistrate, Wardha, to the Chief Secretary, Government of the Central Provinces and Berar; 17 November 1946. File No. 3-A/1947; Political and Military Department, Government of the Central Provinces and Berar (1946); Madhya Pradesh States Archives.

I enclose a copy of the report of the District Superintendent of Police, Wardha. I entirely agree with him that the local Communists have not so far indulged in any such activities of serious type as will necessitate their rounding up at once. For the present they are engaged mostly in fomenting labour troubles by organising unions, and trying to bring about strikes. As a matter of policy they have kept aloof from communal activities, and they have not been very critical of and antagonistic to Government. Their immediate rounding up can be justified only on the ground that they are organising various sections of labour, and fomenting trouble with them.

Illegible.

District Magistrate, Wardha

22. Dossiers on Prominent Communists Active in the CP and Berar

Extracts from notes prepared for the District Superintendent of Police, Nagpur, by Sub Inspector L.M. Joshi; Nagpur, 17 November 1946. File No. 3-A/1947; Political and Military Department, Government of the Central Provinces and Berar (1946); Madhya Pradesh State Archives.

Bhupendra Nath Mukerji

Bhupendra Nath Mukerji [alias] Bhuna is a Bengali unmarried youth aged about 35 residing at Nai-Shukrawari (Nagpur) in a Party occupied house. He is a Communist of provincial importance with considerable influence over the students and the workers particularly at Nagpur, Jabulpore and Raipur. He is a good orator and a penman too, with better organising capacity.

Taking advantage of the unrest among workers in January, 1946, he fomented strike in the textile mills at Nagpur with the object of exploiting the situation for gaining popularity and also to create a split among workers' ranks with a view to bring forth the downfall of R.S. Ruikar, who was a Congress supported candidate for the Assembly election on the trade union ticket. In March, accompanied by other associates he tried to create a mass agitation in Nagpur by protesting against the ration cut proposals suggested by the Government to meet the scarcity of food supplies. In the various meetings which were held by the Communists at Nagpur in the first fortnight of March, he delivered speeches criticising the Govt. for effecting a cut in the essential rations by describing it as a stunt of the British adopted to divert public attention from the national movement and attacking the Congress leaders for their cooperation with the Govt. in solving the food crisis. In July last he took an initial part in inducing the postmen at Nagpur to go on strike against their wishes and to create a deadlock. He participated in the observance of the Kashmiri Repression Day meeting held at Nagpur on the 21st July. After the Communist failure in the Postmen's strikes, B.N. Mukerji with his associates addressed several meetings in August last under the joint auspices of the PWD workers' Union, the Peon's and Allied workers' Union, the Improvement Trust workers' Union and the Govt. Printing Press workers' Union, etc. asking the workers to resort to strike and to strongly protest against the

proposed Trade Disputes Bill purely with the object of creating disorder. He had also given a threat to the Congress Govt. that a joint march would be taken to the Assembly Chamber on the day on which the Bill would come up for discussion. In a meeting held on the 23rd August at Nagpur Mukerji asked the workers to protest against the Trade Disputes Bill even at the cost of their blood and condemned the Congress Government for becoming a tool of the British beaurocracy [bureaucracy]. In October last, he again interfered in the textile workers' strike at Nagpur and on account of his unwarranted [unwarranted] interference, he was very roughly handled by the Trade Unionists, on the 27th October.

Hari Kisan Vyas

H.K. Vyas aged about 35 years who is the Secretary of the Nagpur District Committee of the CPI, is a Communist of local importance with poor organising capacity.

Throughout the year he effected illegal strikes by taking advantage of the unrest among workers. In January last along with his associates though he supported the textile workers' strike at Nagpur he joined hands with the S.C. Federation in creating a split among labourers controlled by Ruikar. As a result of this split in Jan. last there were riots among caste Hindus and Mahars at Nagpur. In March, he protested against Ration Cut Scheme suggested by the Govt. and by delivering speeches in Mohalla meetings tried to create a mass agitation against the Government. On the 16th June he participated in the Sweepers' Demands Day observance at Nagpur by threatening the N.M.C. with a strike while he successfully managed with others the strike of the Rly licensed coolies on the 10th July. He indulged in the postmen's strike in Nagpur against their desire in the 2nd half of July and protested against the Trade Disputes Bill being passed. With the help of O.P. Mehta he indulged in prejudicial propaganda against the Government and successfully effected a strike in the Govt. Printing Press from the 6th Sept. In the first half of September last he sponsored a partial strike of the rickshaw pullers in Nagpur and delivered speeches protesting against the enforcement of the bylaw, preventing [the] taking [of] more than one passenger in a rickshaw. On account of his interference in the textile workers' strike which was started from the 14th October by the Trade Unionists led by V.M. Suryavansi and V.G. Balwaik he was roughly handled in a meeting of workers held at Nagpur on the 27th October, when he asked the workers not to resume work.

He is a dangerous man indulging in fomenting illegal strikes with the intention of creating disorder.

A.B. Bardhan

A.B. Bardhan is a youth of 35 years with untiring energy and is a Communist of provincial importance, with considerable influence over the students and working-classes. He is a good organiser and is a good speaker too. He is one of the most important Communist agitators in Nagpur.

In January last he supported the textile workers' strike in the beginning but later joined hands with the SCF in effecting a permanent split among the Caste Hindus and Mahar workers. He took initiative in the observance of the Independence Day on the 26th January by arranging a separating [separate] programme and supported the RIN ratings' mutiny at Bombay in a public meeting held at Nagpur on the 21st February. He exherted [exerted] much [effort?] in arranging the convention of AISF at Nagpur in the first week of June and protested against the enhancement in the tuition fees in July last. Later he participated in the observance of Kashmir Repression Day ... on the 21st July at Nagpur and though he was not publicly active later, he

was participating in the Communist move[ment]. In July last he prominently participated in sponsoring a strike of the postmen in Nagpur against their desire.

23. Communist Activities in the United Provinces

Extracts from Weekly Report No. 48, 13 December 1946. CID Records, Government of the United Provinces (1946); Uttar Pradesh State Archives.

... The Communists have agitated kisans at Jhansi and Jaunpur, railway labour at Benares and Lucknow, factory labour at Basti and Fyzabad. At Benares and Lucknow they arranged public and students meetings at which Ganesh Ghosh, an ex-Chittagong Armoury Raid Case prisoner, and Shiv Verma, an ex-Lahore Conspiracy Case prisoner, were the main speakers. These ex-convicts related their past exploits, accused the British of fostering communal riots, preached communal harmony and appealed for help for riot victims....

24. Indian People's Theatre at Christchurch College, Kanpur

Extracts from Weekly Report No. 49, 27 December 1946. CID Records, Government of the United Provinces (1946); Uttar Pradesh State Archives.

... Communists held the first UP Provincial Indian People's Theatre Conference in the premises of the Christ Church College at Cawnpore from Dec. 22 to 24. Dramatic performances were organised depicting recent political events in the country and demonstrating that the communal riots were organised by British diplomacy in order that British domination over India might continue. Other scenes depicted were of an anti-capitalist nature....

2.vi THE MAHASABHA AND HINDU COMMUNALISM

1. M.R. Jayakar: Hindu Mahasabha Ought to Merge with Congress

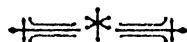
Extracts from copy of a letter by M.R. Jayakar to Jagdish Prasad; Bombay, 7 March 1946. File No. 741; M.R. Jayakar Papers (1946); National Archives of India.

*Bombay,
7th March, 1946.*

My dear Jagdish Prasad,

I was infinitely amused on reading the enclosed letter of Raja Maheshwar Dayal Seth. It reveals what strength the Hindu Sabha leaders possess and also accounts for the complete ruin of that party. Even Syama Prasad Mookerjee cannot save it. Savarkar's faulty leadership for seven years has ruined the party and its best chance now lies in forming a wing in the Congress perpetually watchful of Hindu interest and controlling the Congress from within when it goes off the track out of emotion. I suggested this to Savarkar and one or two Hindu leaders, but they turned it down, accusing me of pro-Congress slavish tendencies....

MRJ



2. Resolutions Passed by the Hindu Conference at Bhalwal, Punjab

Extracts from a letter, with enclosure, sent to the All India Hindu Mahasabha by the Secretary, Arya Samaj, Bhalwal, Punjab; Bhalwal, 7 April 1946. File No. C-90; All India Hindu Mahasabha Papers (1946); Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

*Bhalwal,
7/4/46.*

Sir,

I beg to forward copies of Resolutions passed in the Hindu Conference held here on 29th March under the presidentship of C. Devi Chandji, M.A., of Dayanand Salvation Mission, Hoshiarpur.

Ram Krishna Bharat.
for Secretary.

Enclosure:

Resolution No. I

This Hindu Conference welcomes the Cabinet Mission and appreciates:

- (i) the desire of the British Government to hand over the political power to India.
- (ii) the declaration of the British Premier that the minority will not be allowed to veto the freedom of India nor stand in the way of the progress of the majority.
- (iii) the assurance of the British Premier and the Secretary of State to find a satisfactory solution.

The Conference further submits that the solution should not provide [provide] vivisection of India in any form or shape as Pakistan, etc., cannot but be detrimental in this atomic age.

The Conference is confident that under no threats of non-cooperation or civil war held out by Mr Jinnah will the British Government yield to him and will at all costs and under all circumstances sincerely and boldly stick to the declarations made.

Nothing but complete independence shall satisfy India....

Resolution No. III

The Conference draws the attention of the Government towards the irresponsible and inflammatory speeches and writings in the press, of the Muslim Leaguers and further requests the Government to put down their [Muslim League's] hooliganism with a strong hand as any indulgence shown in this respect will lead to communal strife and bitterness and may even disturb public peace and tranquility.

Resolution No. IV

This Conference urges upon the British Government the dire necessity of releasing political and INA prisoners before constituting an interim National Government and framing the new Constitution based on adult suffrage and joint electorates.

Resolution No. V

This Conference deplores and protests against the anti-Hindi and pro-League policy of the All India Radio and requests the Government to do away with this policy.

Resolution No. VI

This conference requests the Punjab Government:

- (i) To do away with the invidious distinction between the Agriculturists and the Non-Agriculturist[s].
- (ii) To abolish the Land Alienation Act which is highly detrimental to the progress of the provinces.
- (iii) To make recruitment for services and promotions on the bases of pure merit without distinction of caste, colour, or creed, as recruitment made on the basis of religion or community lowers the administrative efficiency.
- (iv) To do away with the stepmotherly treatment of Hindi and preferential treatment of Urdu in educational institutions and to accept Hindi as an alternative court language with Urdu as is the case in Hindu majority provinces like UP and Bihar....

3. Rising Communal Tensions in Delhi and Aligarh

Extracts from a letter by Asutosh Lahiri, General Secretary, to Shyama Prasad Mukherji, President, All India Hindu Mahasabha; New Delhi, 21 April 1946. File No. C-140; All India Hindu Mahasabha Papers (1946); Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

*New Delhi,
21st April 1946.*

My dear Svamaprasad Babu,

... Intense panic prevails here and throughout United Provinces regarding the impending Civil War. Preparations in Delhi are going on swiftly and both Hindus and Moslems are arming themselves [to] their best. The Hindu Defence Committee that has been set up, has divided Delhi into 20 or 22 blocks each under a Commander and they claim that in case Muslims start the civil war they are prepared for the worst. I recently visited Aligarh along with Dr Moonje and to see scenes of devastation is really pathetic. The Kalyanganj Grain Market which is one of the biggest in United Provinces has been completely gutted and strangely enough the very D.S.P. and the Circle Officers who have been accused of connivance and encouraging the students still remain in charge of the investigation. Though three weeks have passed and up to the time of our visit no Muslim accused of Kalyanganj arson has been arrested....

What struck me as a reassuring sign is that there has been an acute realisation amongst all sections of Hindus in Aligarh to prepare for the worst and from the reports received by me, I feel that the Hindus are only being prevented from offensive action owing to the installation [installation] of the Congress ministry in power. .

Unless immediately money is available the whole work will be paralysed. I don't know how to carry on [the] work. Rs 600 have been recently drawn from the Bank for various payments both outstanding and current leaving only Rs 200 in the Bank. Mr Ramkrishna Dalmia is not here and could not be met. I think it will be better if you write to him yourself....

For the moment Delhi is thick with reports of impending communal clashes and preparations are going on [on] both sides. I am trying to be in active touch with the inner developments here. The public meeting at Delhi was a great success. People listened to our speeches quietly,

though we criticised the Congress strongly. There appears to be a definite reaction against the Congress though it cannot be said it is in favour of the Mahasabha.

A. Lahiry.

Copy to Mr L.B. Bhopatkar, Working President, Poona.

4. All India Hindu Mahasabha Memorandum to Cabinet Mission

Extracts from a report of the Working Committee, All India Hindu Mahasabha; New Delhi, 24 April 1946. File No. C-111; All India Hindu Mahasabha Papers (1946); Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

*New Delhi,
24 April 1946.*

All India Hindu Mahasabha

A meeting of the Working Committee of the All India Hindu Mahasabha was held on 14th, 15th and 16th April at New Delhi. The following members were present:

- (1) Dr Syamaprasad Mookerjee.
- (2) Mr L.B. Bhopatkar.
- (3) Mr Lala Narain Dutt.
- (4) Dr B.S. Moonje.
- (5) Mr V.V. Kalikar.
- (6) Mr Ramkrishna Pande.
- (7) Mr N. Panchanathan Aiyer.
- (8) Mohant Digvijaynath.
- (9) Mr Harishchandra.
- (10) Capt. Keshabchander.
- (11) Sj. Ashotosh Lahiry.
- (12) Mr K.H. Dhamdhare.

Dr Syamaprasad Mookerjee presided.

Memorandum

The memorandum prepared by the Acting President, Mr L.B. Bhopatkar was placed before the meeting and it was adopted with certain modifications. The following is the full text of the memorandum approved by the Committee.

On behalf of the All India Hindu Mahasabha we submit for the Delegations favourable consideration the following viewpoints which the Mahasabha has been advocating for several years past.

Declaration of Independence

As all sovereignty in respect of India vests in the Indian people, it is the right of the Indians to be fully and completely free like all the free peoples in the World.

It is only absolutely unfettered freedom that will enable India to be a front-line nation in the World, and to play her rightful role in the maintenance of World-peace and World-order. It is Independence coupled with India's natural resources, manpower and strategic position in the geography of the World that will enable her to hold the scales even between the West and

the East. There are also several other considerations which require that India should be free from any external obligations and control.

The Hindu Mahasabha, therefore, urges that India should be fully free and independent, and that a declaration to that effect should be immediately made by the British Cabinet through proper channel[s]....

The Indian National Army

The Working Committee is of opinion that the members of the Indian National Army who fought under Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose were imbued with the highest sense of patriotic duty and have set an example of sacrifice and suffering which deserves our highest appreciation. The Committee deplores that the Government of India is still persisting in the senseless policy of prosecuting these brave sons of Mother India inspite of overwhelming opposition of the country. The Committee demands that all legal proceedings against the members and officers of the Indian National Army be withdrawn and that they be released forthwith.

Asutosh Lahiri.
General Secretary.

5. Hindu Mahasabha on the Impact of Communal Riots

Copy of a letter by Asutosh Lahiri, General Secretary, to Shyama Prasad Mukherji, President, All India Hindu Mahasabha; New Delhi, 24 April 1946. File No. C-140; All India Hindu Mahasabha Papers (1946); Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

*New Delhi,
24 April 1946.*

Dear Sir,

I hope you have received my previous letter. Dr Moonje, myself, Mohant Digvijaynath and others visited Aligarh. We are getting ready the report which I intend to publish in the form of a booklet. I have sent Mr Ramkrishna Pande to Bhopal to enquire into the situation there. Muslims after their Jumma prayers on Friday marched towards the Hindu bazar and looted all their shops. They also desecrated 12 temples while the police stood by and did nothing. Muslim shops owing to Jumma prayers were closed on the date.

The Aligarh and Bhopal riot, etc., has provided a good field for our work and rehabilitate [rehabilitate] ourselves in public estimation. The situation has now greatly improved in our favour due to communal riots in UP & Punjab and owing to fear and panic amongst Hindus.

I am anxious to know what arrangements have been made for funds. No movement is possible unless I have some funds at my disposal. The sum of Rs 600 that I drew from Sj. Keshabchanderji has been mostly spent for making arrear payments and for other specific purposes. I feel that Rs 1000 will be required for Head-office expenses if the work is to be carried on properly. I have advertised for an Office Superintendent. In order to enable the Head-office to function properly, we should have an Office-Superintendent and a wholetime typist. If you have any person in view who can function as superintendent he will be welcome. I rang up Mr Dalmia but he evaded me. I am sending herewith some letters addressed to you.

AL
General Secretary.

6. Delhi Hindu Mahasabha in Need of Funds

Extracts from a letter by Asutosh Lahiri, General Secretary, to Shyam Prasad Mukherji, President, All India Hindu Mahasabha; New Delhi, 14 May 1946. File No. C-140; All India Hindu Mahasabha Papers (1946); Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

*New Delhi,
14 May 1946.*

Dear Dr Mookerjee,

... I told Birla that he should pay additional Rs 500 for the Hindu Mahasabha per month....

... Delhi Hindu Mahasabha is virtually dead and in the next meeting of the Working Committee I would ask for constitution of an Ad-hoc Committee for Delhi Province....

Yds/,-,
AL
General Secretary.

7. Hindu Mahasabha Plans for Getting into the Constituent Assembly

Extracts from a letter by Asutosh Lahiri, General Secretary, to Shyama Prasad Mukherji, President, All India Hindu Mahasabha; New Delhi, 20 May 1946. File No. C 140; All India Hindu Mahasabha Papers (1946); Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

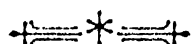
*New Delhi,
20 May 1946.*

My dear Dr Mookerjee,

I met Sd. Sarat Chandra Bose last night and had half an hour discussion with him. I was particularly anxious that some representatives of the Hindu Mahasabha may come in through election and take part in the Constitution-making Body. He, of course, assured me that you would be certainly elected from Bengal and he said that he wanted some noted Constitutionalists to be in the Constitution-making Body from Bengal. I spoke of Dr Naresh Chandra Roy and he said that he would consult you and select some capable university professors who are noted for their knowledge of constitutional law. He will be going back to Calcutta on the 24th or 25th and then he would go to Kurseong for a short change. He, however assured me that he would see you before he goes to Kurseong. I hope that of the 27 general members to be elected by the Bengal Assembly at least 4 would be taken from Hindu Mahasabha. Kindly talk over this matter when Mr Bose goes to see you....

I am trying to see Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel with a view to find[ing] out whether it is possible to come to an informal understanding so that a few Hindu Mahasabha members may come into the Constitution-making Body from different Provinces and whether an understanding with the Hindu Mahasabha on an all India basis can be worked out. I hope to see him sometime tomorrow or the day after....

A. Lahiry
General Secretary.



8. Hindu Mahasabha Rejects the Non-violent Path to Freedom

Presidential address delivered by B.S. Moonje, Acting President, All India Hindu Mahasabha, at the All India Hindu Mahajati Sammelan held at Kurukshetra (Haryana) on 19 and 20 August 1946. File No. C-105; All India Hindu Mahasabha Papers (1946); Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

... This Conference of the world renowned Hindu Race which is the oldest race of humanity in the world, is being held at a place where the greatest War, the Mahabharat, of the very olden times was fought to a finish, say, some six thousand years ago. The personality whose marvellous ingenuity and inconceivable skill won this war for the Pandavas was himself bound down through feelings of divided sentimentality between the two sets of brothers, his own near relations, waging war against each other, by his own promise and public declaration of having renounced personal use of any weapons of war, for the occasion. We have always regarded and worshipped the personality as an Avtar, the incarnation of God, Almighty. We know him as Bhagwan Shri Krishna and have truthfully raised him to the highest pinnacle of glory and reverence by declaring him to be the Purna Avtar.

This war was a civil war which was fought between two sets [of] brothers, both being claimants to the common sacred Imperial Throne of Hindusthan at Hastinapur, the present Delhi of India of the British. When two such influential brothers fight against each other to occupy one common Imperial Throne, it is certainly a terrible and heartrending calamity to the people of the realm who naturally have relations, affiliations, allegiances and loyalties in both the warring camps. But we have successfully gone through several such calamities in the course of succeeding ages since then and having survived and thrived and what is more, we have cherished these very calamities, in spite of their being terribly colossal, as our most sacred and inspiring heritage to act [as] a shining and manoeuvring beacon of guidance for the imperishable future.

At the present moment we Hindus in India are again in the midst of the immediate prospect of such a calamity of a Civil War between two sets of real brothers, in blood and bones, though they profess different religions.

Will the teaching of Mahabharat and the personality, Lord Krishna, who fought the Mahabharat War, again guide us to victory and prosperity? Such is the idea that is pervading and has taken hold of our minds at the present moment when the painful prospect of a devastating Civil War stands face to face with us, who, as representatives of the great Hindu Race of Hindusthan, have met and assembled here in this vast concourse....

Thus, whether the threat of Civil War presently in India be merely a bluff to terrorise the British or the Hindus or whether it were to culminate eventually in an actual warfare—which, God forbid—one thing is certain. It will not be a spiritual warfare waged by spiritual weapons such as Ahimsa, that is, Truth and Non-violence; and unless to avoid bloodshed, we decide to surrender and to undergo complete self-abnegation and humiliation, we will have to organise violence on a scientific basis....

We Hindus since the advent of Buddha, have become more metaphysical in temperament and have descended into believing in the cult of self-abnegation and suffering, which we call spiritualism, that is, Truth and Non-violence. We have shed our aggressive virility and worldly practicality as cultivated by and enjoined in Vedic Civilisation....

... What a sad metamorphosis of a warlike and dignified Hindu of old of the pre-Buddhistic period into a mild, timid, cowardly, cunning Hindu of the post-Buddhistic period, that is, of our present times....

But where does sovereignty actually lie? Does it lie in masses of men or in an individual or an association of individuals who are leaders of the masses of men? Echoing back in Srinagar Kashmir what has been learnt in Books and ideas exorted from the West, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru says that Sovereignty lies in the masses, that is, in the people and therefore, supporting and defending Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah in his revolt against the Maharaja of Kashmir, calls upon the Maharaja of Kashmir to "Quit Kashmir" and hand over the sovereignty to Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah and his gang.

Leaving aside the half-baked ideas and theories exported from Europe which Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, without studying what our own Aryan philosophers have to say in the matter, accepts as inviolable truth, let us see what is promulgated by our Aryan philosophers in respect of the questions as to where sovereignty lies, whether in the masses or elsewhere. *Manusmriti* in its *Adhyaya* on *Rajdharama* says *Danda*, that is, Law and Sanction, is the King, the man as distinguished from cowards, the leader, and the administrator; besides it is also the guarantee of *Dharma*, that is, that the society will observe sociological and political Laws. For as who are educated and brought up in modern thoughts and ideas, I have translated *Danda* as Law and Sanction.... Thus sovereignty lies in Law and Sanction and not in (the) masses. The Law and Sanction may be organised and brought into being by one man like Shivaji, the Great, or Rani Laxmibai of Jhansi....

... The Congress sovereignty will be based on Law as we understand it in our modern times but with Truth and Non-Violence as its sanction, that is, with spirituality as its sanction. On the contrary, the sovereignty, if assumed by the Muslim League, will be fanatically communal and exercised according to the Laws of Shariat as at present in vogue, say, in Hyderabad Deccan, but as regards its sanction, it will be awefully [awfully] material and violent, that is, in carrying it out, the Muslims League will be more violent, communal and merciless, particularly in respect of the Hindus and of the Hindu religion.

Such is the nature of the rivalry and such will be the difference in the natures of their respective sovereignties. We, being Hindus, will naturally join the Congress to secure the sovereignty; but let it be plainly and boldly said that we will not be satisfied with merely the spiritual sanction and that we will do out level best, even in defiance, if need be, of Mahatma Gandhi's Non-Violence, to create and organise what is called the material sanction based on scientifically organised violence.

It is for this reason that the Hindu Mahasabha has been crying, though till now practically in wilderness, for the need to see that the Indian Army is composed on the basis of the existing communal proportions in the general population of the country, that is, in the Indian Army and particularly in its combatant ranks and in the Indian Police, there should be not less than 75 per cent of Hindus and not more than 25 per cent of Muslims. If provision be not made immediately—because for our safety, it brooks no delay or indifference—to meet the existing defects of this nature both in the army and in the Police by some non-official means, to start with, the Congress may be hopelessly handicapped in the exercise of its sovereignty, and may possibly have to strike its head against the stone wall of determined Moslem opposition....

The Hindu Mahasabha, therefore, call upon the Hindus to relegate Non-Violence in its proper place in spheres of spirituality and be prepared to act as the Geeta advises ... that is, rise and fight with determination, so that [after the] fight for sovereignty is over, the Heavenly

Kingdom of Non-Violence is established not only in India but throughout the whole World if we can help it. God is Great.

9. A Letter Written Allegedly by an Ex-Muslim Leaguer

Letter from M.S. Rao, founder, Karnataka Vidyarthi Samithi, to Jawaharlal Nehru; Bombay, 20 September 1946. File No. G-53; All India Hindu Mahasabha Papers (1946); Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

*Bombay,
20th September 1946.*

Jai Hind, Rashtrapathiji,

I enclose herewith a copy of letter received by me from a friend of mine from Calcutta and shall be glad if you could kindly give me your valuable advice in the matter.

The enclosed copy will speak [for] itself whether it is the proper time to follow Bapuji's non-violence policy or not. However, I leave this matter to you to judge and advise.

With respectful regards,

Jai Hind.

Yours sincerely,
M.S. Rao.

Enclosure

Habibur Rahman,

Care. Calcutta Military Hospital,
Calcutta,
18-8-46.

From An Ex-Muslim Leaguer.

Now it is my bound in [bounden] duty to expose dictatorship and fascist methods of Muslim League for which I left the Muslim League and request every true Musalman to leave it and join the Indian National Congress for the good of India and good of the world.

Dear Sir,

I left Muslim League in February 1946 and joined the Congress whole heartedly for the good of all in India.

Some two Muslim Leaguers came to my house on 16th August 46 afternoon, i.e., on Direct Action Day, and asked me whether I was the person who had left the League and I said 'yes' they then asked me to re-join the League, but I refused whereupon I was gagged and was taken to another place blind fold in a car. Then half an hour later I was stabbed and left in a rubbish dump. On 16th August I found myself in a hospital with bandages on my left hand and left thigh (Stab wounds from Leaguers). I was then taken to another hospital. Here I met a doctor and told him the matter and requested him to send my statements to all the presses in the country. I left the All India Muslim League in February 46 because their organisation is a dictatorship, a Fascist and aggressive [aggressive] element in this country which was planning to destroy India's Independence and progress and at the same time it was betraying India and

Asia to British and American interests at the cost of blood of all Non-Leaguers by which Muslim League aimed at keeping whole of India at their mercy under schemes similar to Nazi methods.

Having gained all secret information I expose Muslim League aims and object[s] which are betraying not only League but whole India. Jinnah, our Muslim League leader, is going on in the footsteps of Lawrence of Arabia and following methods of Hitler, Chongiz [Genghis] Khan and other figures in history. Mr Jinnah issued a secret circular in Dec. 45 and it was a verbal one, which circular I came to know about [after?] four months of struggle. I expose [it] at the risk of my life, still I am doing sacred duty to Mother India. I came to understand that [the] circular was not recorded in documents but passed round to all Muslim Leaguers (working committee), since Jinnah said that possessing the document would mean the expouser [exposure] and defeat of League. The instructions of the circular were carried out on direct action day sixteenth August 46.

Here is the verbal circular passed by Jinnah and working committee of the Muslim League.

1. All Muslims of India shall die for Pakistan.
2. The Pakistan established, whole of India should be conquered.
3. All people of India should be converted to Islam.
4. The Muslim kingdom should join hand with Anglo-American exploitations of the whole world.
5. One Muslim must get rights of five Hindus, that is each Muslim equal to five Hindus.
6. Until Pakistan Indian Empire is established, the following actions should be taken.
 - (a) All factories and shops owned by Hindus should be burnt, destroyed and looted and loot should be given to League office.
 - (b) All Muslim Leaguer[s] [to] carry weapons in defence of orders.
 - (c) All nationalist Muslims if they do not join the League must be murdered by secret League gestapo [gestapo].
 - (d) Hindus should be murdered gradually and their population will be reduced.
 - (e) All temples should be destroyed.
 - (f) Muslim League spies should be kept in every village and district of India.
 - (g) Congress leaders should be murdered, one in one month by some secret methods.
 - (h) Congress [news]paper offices will be destroyed by secret Muslim gestapo (single person doing the job).
 - (i) Karachi, Bombay, Calcutta, Madras, Goa, Vizag, should be paralysed by Dec. 46 by Muslim League volunteers.
 - (j) Muslim should never be allowed to work under Hindus in army, Navy or Govt.: service or private firms.
 - (k) Muslims should sabotage whole of India and Congress Govt.: for the final invasion of India by Muslims.
 - (l) Financial resources are given for Muslim League invasion of India by Nizam, Communists, few Europeans, Khojas, by Bhopal, a few Anglo-Indian[s], a few Parsies [Parsis], a few Christians, Punjab, Sind, and Bengal will be places of manufacture of arms, weapons for Muslim Leaguers invasion and establishment of Muslim Empire in India.
 - (m) All arms and weapons should be distributed to Bombay, Calcutta, Delhi, Madras, Bangalore, Lahore, Karachi branches of Muslim League.

- (n) All sections of Muslims should carry minimum equipments of weapons at least pocket knives [at] all time to destroy Hindus and drive all Hindus from India.
- (o) All transport should be used and organised for battle against Hindus.
- (p) Hindu women and girls should be wraped [raped] and kidnapped and converted to Muslims from Oct.: 18th 1946.
- (q) Hindu culture should be destroyed.
- (r) All Leaguers must try to [be] cruel at all time to Hindus and boycott them socially, economically and in any other ways.
- (s) No Muslim should buy from Hindu dealers. All Hindu produced films [films] should be boycotted. All Muslim Leaguers should obey these instructions and bring into action by 16th Sep. 46.

These are the true reasons why I could not remain with the League and now my desire is that this fanatic organisations should be nipped in the bud.

I request all Musalmans of India to listen to my cry and give up the Muslim League dictatorship and join the humanitarian [humanitarian] Congress for the benefit of all. Since I am a true Musalman [I] may remind [remind] all my brother Musalmans about the past.

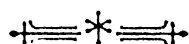
We Muslims have conquered India and ruled India, and during our rule we tortured and killed Hindus, we destroyed their temples. We treated them as slaves for nearly 700 years. Hindus have been oppressed by us (Muslims) and then by British for a total of nearly 1000 years and when Hindus want to get independence for the whole of India and nearly got it after a hard struggle, we Muslims especially Leaguers are obstructing the Congress and Hindus.

Congress is humanitarian and it will look after all equality. Hindus have been very kind, hospital and non-violent for thousands of years, and they are never aggressive, and that is why we Muslims want to over-ride them [sic]. Hindus have never oppressed us, but Muslims have oppressed them for centuries, Hindus are our brothers and we Muslims and Hindus could help for the sacred task of glorifying India. But the Muslim League persists [persists] in dividing Indian[s] and destroying them, then I will pray to Allah to help in destroying the unislamic and bloodthirsty Muslim League. I request the whole of India to unite [e] and fight against this new Hitler Jinnah and his colleagues who are following nazi methods, and divide the destroyed India. I have definite [definite] proof that Muslim Leaguers [are] responsible for [the] Calcutta and Bombay orgy.

I shall die as a true Musalman by trying to unite [e] Hindus and Muslims and having a single united India in case I recover from my stab wounds given by kind Muslim Leaguers.

My final request to present Govt. of India is to arrest all leaders of Muslim League, including Jinnah and punish them in accordance with justice and law, because Muslim League leaders had organised for arson, beastly murdered [murders] in Calcutta, Bombay and several other places for loot and gangsterism. Leaguers are dangerous to the peace of India.

Yours faithfully,
Habibur Rehman.



10. All India Hindu Mahasabha Resolution on Direct Action

Letter by M.V. Ganapati, Advocate, Madras, to the Secretary, All India Hindu Mahasabha; Madras, 22 October 1946. File No. C-106; All India Hindu Mahasabha Papers (1946); Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

Madras.
22nd October 1946.

Sir,

I hereby give you notice of the following resolution which I desire to move at the forthcoming session of the All India Hindu Maha Sabha at Gorakhpur.

"This Session of the All India Hindu Maha Sabha is of the opinion that the repetition of the gruesome happenings of Eastern Bengal could be prevented in future only by an 'invasion' of the Hindu minority districts of Bengal by Hindus from the Hindu majority parts of India and settling large number of Hindus in those districts, and this Session of the All India Hindu Maha Sabha calls upon the Provincial Sabhas to take steps to implement this programme of direct action for the defence and safety of the Hindus in those districts."

Yours faithfully,
M.V. Ganapati.

11. M.R. Jayakar: Congress Should Not Appease Muslim Separatism

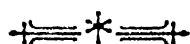
Extracts from a letter by M.R. Jayakar to T.B. Sapru; Bombay, 22 October 1946. File No. 807; M.R. Jayakar Papers (1946); National Archives of India.

Bombay,
October 22, 1946

My dear Tej Bahadur

... The occurrences at Noakhali and amongst the Frontier tribes are an eye-opener and I am glad that Jawaharlal for once at least said that, if the Muslims were spoiling for a fight, they would get it. This should have been said by some responsible leader long long ago. You can't placate blood-thirsty and fanatical rowdy crowd by sentiments of friendliness or goodwill. They may exist in the background of your mind, but the front must be of strength and sternness. It is a typical case of the iron hand with a velvet glove and in past Congress transactions the iron hand was non-existent and the velvet glove was too prominent. You may say that these are my sentiments as a Maratha, whose ancestors dealt with the Muslims in the only efficacious way they understood. The whole of Maharashtra feels like me and will act accordingly if occasion arises.

Yours very sincerely,
MRJ



12. Muslim League's Communal Campaign in Bengal

Extracts from a letter by T.B. Saprú to M.R. Jayakar; Allahabad, 26 October 1946.
File No. 807; M.R. Jayakar Papers; National Archives of India.

Allahabad,
26th October 1946.

My dear Jayakar,

... The situation in Bengal is horrible. The Muslim League has deliberately started its campaign in Bengal because they know that physically the Bengalis could not stand up to them. They would think twice before doing so in the Punjab or in the Maharashtra.

Yours very sincerely,
T.B. Saprú.

13. Madan Mohan Malaviya Calls Hindus to Defend Themselves

Extracts from a news report, 'Pandit Malaviya's calls to Hindus'. *Hindustan Times*,
2 November 1946.

BENARES, November 1. "I feel that humanity is at stake. Hindu culture and religion are in danger. A state of emergency exists and the time has come for the Hindus to unite and to make effective self-protection and self-assertion," says Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya in a statement on the disturbances in the country.

"For years together Hindus have done their best and have helped in an accommodating spirit to see that there is a genuine Hindu-Muslim unity. Even today the Hindus want to cooperate and show toleration, but I regret to say that toleration is interpreted as weakness and cooperation is not reciprocated by the majority amongst the Muslims.

"It is not with a spirit of intolerance that I issue this statement, but it is after due care and contemplation and because of the fact that unless the Hindus as a community now assert themselves the Hindu-Muslim problem will remain in the field with all its menacing potentialities.

"The Hindu leaders have both a duty towards their mother country and towards their religion, culture and their Hindu brethren. It is absolutely necessary that the Hindus should organise themselves, work together as one man, produce a band of selfless and patriotic workers with service as their sole aim, forget all differences between castes and *varnas*, and strive their utmost for the protection of the Hindus and for the preservation of their ideals and culture...."

"The Hindus must raise protest against the inroads of a pestilence that sounds the death-knell for the Hindus as a majority community. A note of warning may be sounded, by asserting themselves or by starting a volunteer organisation, or by militarising their outlook, they do not wish any violence to anyone....

"If the Hindus do not protect themselves, they will die. If they do not organise themselves, they will perish in no time. If they linger behind they will be trampled to inactivity and death. They must not have inertia. They must have faith. They must have courage. They must not fear to die. They must love the Hindus as brothers. They must tolerate all Hindus and must not tolerate those Muslims who do not want them to live in peace...."



14. Hindu Mahasabha Proposes a United Front of Hindu Organisations

Circular letters by B.S. Moonje, Acting President, All India Hindu Mahasabha, to leaders of various Hindu organisations; Nasik, 4 December 1946. File No. C-94; All India Hindu Mahasabha Papers (1946); Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

*Nasik,
4 December 1946*

Dear Sir,

While returning from my Bihar tour, I had an occasion to met Dr Shyama Prasad Mookerjee and Mr N.C. Chatterjee and other friends at Calcutta on 28th November. In my conversation with Dr Mookerjee, it was unanimously suggested that a small information Conference of representatives of the various bodies working in the name of the Hindus in social, political and religious fields be soon convened at New Delhi for the purpose of considering measures to be organised to fight the great crisis through which the Hindus of practically the whole of India are passing at the present moment. Mussulmans who have created this crisis are speaking with one determined voice and working through their agency of the Muslim League. As for the Hindus, there is no one to speak authoritatively for them. Their one organisation, the Hindu Mahasabha, has been for all practical purposes wiped out during the propaganda-flood of elections by the Congress, though it is now again raising its head. The Congress is now the Government in the country but it refuses to work or speak in the name of the Hindus and thus leaves the field free to the Moslems. They work [a]gainst the Hindus in Provinces like Bengal where they are a majority and from the Government, which being autonomous, does not allow the Central Government to touch them even by a pair of tongs.

Thus, looking to the terrible havoc that has been caused to the Hindus in Bengal, there is great need for all Hindu organisations to meet and chalk out a plan of action to counteract both the aggressive activities of the Muslim League on one side and suicidal temperament of appeasement of the Muslim League and the Moslems generally exhibited by the Congress on the other.

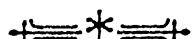
In the capacity of the Acting President of the Hindu Mahasabha, I am therefore inviting you most cordially to make it convenient to accept this invitation for the Conference to be held at Delhi, which would be held at the Hindu Mahasabha Bhawan, Reading Road, New Delhi on Saturday and Sunday, the 14th and 15th of December 1946 at 3 p.m.

Thanking you in anticipation and awaiting reply at your earliest convenience.

Yours sincerely,
Dr B.S. Moonje.

P.S. I am inviting representatives and leaders of the following Hindu organisations:

1. Hindu Mahasabha.
2. Varnashramm Swarajya Sewa Sangh.
3. Sanatan Hindu Dharma Sabha.
4. Arya Samaj.
5. Arya Hindu Dharma Sewa Sangh (Sh. Seth J.K. Birla)



15. Hindu Mahasabha Warned Not to Make Inflammatory Speeches

Extracts from a letter by the District Magistrate, Gorakhpur, to the executive of Hindu Mahasabha, Gorakhpur; Gorakhpur, 11 December 1946. File No. C-106; All India Hindu Mahasabha Papers (1946); Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

*Gorakhpur,
December 11, 1946.*

Dear Sirs,

I have to thank you for your official letter No. 914 dated 7th of December, 1946, enclosing an outline programme of the various function[s] intended to be [held] on the 27th, 28th and 29th of December 1946 at Gorakhpur. Specific replies to the questions raised in your letter can only be given after you have considered and replied to the questions raised by para 2 of this letter and my other letter No. 97/H.(M.S.) of date.

2. I have already drawn your attantion [attention] to the view of the UP Government that the A.I. Hindu Mahasabha Session should be postponed for some time. If you unfortunately cannot see your way to postpone the session and connected functions[s] then I am requested to convey the wishes of the Government that if the meeting is held according to programme, it is essential that those who are responsible for and of taking every precaution that inflammatory speeches are not made....

... It would be necessary to drop the idea of the Swadeshi Exhibition; to limit the attendance to 3000 delegates including distinguished visitors, if it is not possible to omit them at this stage, to give up any idea of taking out any procession[s] or making announcement[s] by loud speakers outside the pandal, in general, to agree to reasonable precautionary measures in consultation with the District Magistrate, Gorakhpur, details of which can be discussed after you have agreed to the main proposition set forth above.

Yours sincerely,
R.V. Vernede.
District Magistrate, Gorakhpur.

16. Restrictions on Hindu Mahasabha by UP Government

Extracts from a draft letter by the Secretary, Reception Committee, All India Hindu Mahasabha, Gorakhpur, to the District Magistrate, Gorakhpur; Gorakhpur, 15 December 1946.

File No. C-106; All India Hindu Mahasabha Papers (1946); Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

*Gorakhpur,
15 December 1946.*

Dear Sir,

... More than ever today the Mahasabha has to devise ways and means to protect the Hindu rights and culture and to give the right lead to the Hindus of India for their very existence, and as such it is very much regretted that the All India Hindu Mahasabha Session cannot be confined to purely business matter[s]....

... I cannot see any justification for the UP (Congress) Govt. putting undue restrictions on the attendance of persons in the Hindu Mahasabha Session....

I am really very much astonished at the suggestion that no procession of the President Elect be taken out. A procession is an honour done to the distinguished guests and has been acknowledged and by practice accepted to be the best means of paying homage to the guests by the citizens. This is an occasion when the most distinguished son of Hindu India, whom the whole of Hindu India has elected to be their Head comes to our city and at such a time to prohibit 90% of the District population from welcoming their honoured guest cannot be justified on any account whatever. Besides the entire route through which the procession would pass lies in 99% Hindu population. I cannot see why the Govt. should be afraid of this procession.

As to precautions by me to prevent inflammatory speeches I beg to tell you that the various speakers will be leaders of the nation who must be fully alive to their responsibilities....

... We are very much afraid that if the Govt. decide to put any restrictions and take any measures to enforce these restrictions it will only further complicate matters and worsen the situation. We think the Govt. can best serve the cause of communal peace and harmony by remaining firm in its policy of non-interference alone.

Yours sincerely,

Unsigned.

Sec., Reception Committee,

All India Hindu Mahasabha, Gorakhpur.

17. Hindu Mahasabha Blames Bengal League Ministry for Noakhali Tragedy

Extracts from a resolution passed at the Gorakhpur session of the All India Hindu Mahasabha; dated, but probably 29 December 1946. File No. C-108; All India Hindu Mahasabha Papers (1946); Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

Noakhali Tragedy

The shocking events which took place in the district of Noakhali began on the 10th October and ultimately covered an area of about 250 sq. miles in the Sub-division of Chandpur in the district of Tipperah and in four police stations in the district of Noakhali, namely, Begumganj, Ramganj, Raipur and Lakhipur. They followed the Great Calcutta Killing which was the consequence of the "Direct Action" declared by the Muslim League. The calculated brutalities were instigated and planned by the League and the same were enacted with the connivance and encouragement of the local authorities. The brutalities went on unchecked in East Bengal for days resulting in the riotous and armed mobs murdering prominent Hindu leaders like Sjt. Rajendralal Roy, President, Noakhali District Hindu Mahasabha and in the massacre of the adult male population of a number of families in the disturbed area. Organised hooliganism resulted in the looting and burning of thousands of Hindu houses, the callous destruction of Hindu properties worth crores of rupees and the forcible mass conversion of about one hundred thousand people and the sufferers included thousands of Hindus belonging to scheduled castes.

The tragic feature of this outburst of wanton brutality was the outrage of women, mass conversion and abduction and forcible marriages....

There has been a welcome sign of new consciousness among the Hindus throughout Hindusthan but this consciousness must be transmitted into constructive work for the preservation and emancipation of the Nation.... This All India Hindu Mahasabha declares that the Muslim League Ministry has forfeited its right to carry on the administration of Bengal and that the following steps should be taken to prevent mass persecution and torture of the Hindus:

(a) that in order to inspire confidence among the Hindus in Hindu minority districts there should be settlements of Hindus of those districts in convenient localities at the expenses of the Government;

(b) that suitable arrangements should be made for the security of such Hindu settlements and the maintenance of the economic and cultural life of the people in such settlements;

(c) that full compensation should be given to the Hindus in the affected areas in Bengal and punitive taxes should be imposed on the aggressive community;

(d) that a Hindu Militia or National Guard be formed for organising the defence of Hindus so as to make them repel all aggressors and to secure the protection of the culture and religion;

(e) that every Hindu woman should carry a dagger and should learn the art of self-defence.

(f) that although it is a matter of satisfaction that thousands of Hindus who were forcibly converted have been rescued and most of the women who were forcibly abducted and married have been recovered and they have been treated as Hindus and honourably accepted by their relations, strong efforts should be made for the rescue of those girls who have not yet been recovered;

(g) that Hindu society must purge itself of all disabilities and discriminations imposed on any caste or section and intensify true sangathan or consolidation of all classes and sections of the Hindus;

(h) that a Committee consisting of five persons to be nominated by the President, be appointed to carry out the constructive suggestions made above to report to the Working Committee within three months.

Moved by	— Mr N.C. Chatterjee.
Seconded by	— Mr Gokul Chand Narang.
Supported by	— Mr D.V. Ghokale.
"	— Ranisaheba of Sherkol.
"	— Mr Chand Karan Sarda.
"	— Mr Debendranath Mookerjee.

18. All India Hindu Mahasabha Conference at Gorakhpur

Extracts from Weekly Report No. 49, 27 December 1946. CID Records, Government of the United Provinces (1946); Uttar Pradesh State Archives.

... The highlight of the fortnight under review was the 27th session of All India Hindu Mahasabha Conference which was held at Gorakhpur on December 27, 28, 29 and 30, 1946. Between 40 to 60 thousand people including about 7000 delegates from all over India with a strong contingent from Bengal and Bihar were present at the Session. Detailed reports of the proceedings of the Conference are not yet to hand but preliminary reports indicate that it was an unqualified success. The Session was inaugurated by Dr Shyama Prasad Mukerji and was held under the presidentship of Dr L.B. Bhopatkar who was proposed by Mahant Digvijai Nath,

President of the Agra Provincial Hindu Mahasabha. The proceedings of the Conference have been reported in detail in the press. The flag hoisting ceremony on the 28th was followed by the open session of the Conference. In his printed address Dr Bhopatkar appealed to the Hindus to unite under the banner of the All India Hindu Mahasabha to enable Hindus to face in unity the critical times which lay ahead. He warned his audience that a fight with the Muslims was inevitable and that they must establish a Hindu Raj. In his address he made mention of the third party intervention of the British Power and referred to the danger in which Hindu society stood from Jinnah. At the second sitting of the Mahasabha 3 resolutions on the Noakhali outrages, Hazara atrocities and the ban imposed by the Bengal Government on kirpans work by Sikhs, were moved and passed unanimously. In this connection several speeches were delivered but the speech of Mr N.C. Chatterjee of Calcutta was particularly exciting and objectionable....

The Conference appealed to the Sadhus and Mahants to join the Mahasabha and authorised Mahant Digvijay Nath to organise them to preach Hinduism from door to door and prepare Hindus for facing the Muslims boldly....

In preparation for the All India Hindu Mahasabha Conference preliminary conferences were held in nearly all districts of the Province....

19. Hindu Communal Propaganda in the United Provinces

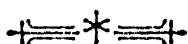
Extracts from Weekly Report No. 49, 27 December 1946. CID Records, Government of the United Provinces (1946); Uttar Pradesh State Archives.

... In the Mirzapur district a Hindi printed leaflet entitled "Bang Kanya Ki Marmasparshi Appeal" published and printed at Allahabad by the Mantri Hindi Mahasabha, Prayag, was distributed on Dec. 13, 1946. The leaflet gives the story of a Hindu woman who had been molested in Noakhali in the presence of her father, husband and sons who were killed by the Muslims. It appeals to Hindus and specially to Hindu women to counter Muslim tyranny with the sword....

20. Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh Activities in the United Provinces

Extracts from Weekly Report No. 49, 27 December 1946. CID Records, Government of the United Provinces (1946); Uttar Pradesh State Archives.

... Twenty-four districts report activities of the RSS. among these are Aligarh, Azamgarh, Benares, Jaunpur, Mirzapur, Muzaffarnagar, Rae Bareli and Sultanpur where Training Camps were organised. Attendances at these Camps varied from a hundred to two thousand persons. The largest attendance was at the Camp opened at Hathras in the Aligarh district from Dec. 22, 1946. Here the camping ground was guarded by volunteers and only pass-holders could gain admittance. Morning and evening parades were held and all India Sangh leaders were expected to visit the Camp on December 30 and 31 when the final demonstrations would be given. At the Azamgarh Camp sentries were similarly posted all round the camping ground to prevent any outsiders gaining entry. At most of the camps volunteers were put through a course of military drill, PT, lathi exercises, etc....



21. Hindu Mahasabha Proposes Formation of Hindūstan National Guards

News report, 'National guards for self-defence'. *Hindustan Times*, 31 December 1946.

Gorakhpur, December 30. The 27th session of the All India Hindu Mahasabha, held here under the presidentship of Mr L.B. Bhopatkar, concluded today after four days' deliberations during which it passed a number of resolutions on various problems affecting the interest of the Hindus.

The highlight of today's session was the unanimous adoption of the resolution embodying the future programme of the Hindus which envisages the formation of the Hindustan National Guards for the purpose of self-defence.

The new Working Committee of the All India Hindu Mahasabha has been formed. The following are the new members: President—Mr L.B. Bhopatkar; Vice-Presidents—Dr V.D. Savarkar, Dr Shyama Prasad Mookerjee, Mr B.G. Khaparde (in case Bhai Paramanand refuses to accept), Mr N.C. Chatterjee and Mahant Digvijainath; General Secretary—Dr B.S. Moonje; Secretaries—Mr Ashutosh Lahiri and Mr V.C. Deshpande; Treasurer—Captain Deshab Chander; Members—Mr Gangadhar Tulsidas (Sind), Mr Amhendra Dewan (Gujarat), Kumar Suresh Prakash Singh (Oudh), Mr R. Narsinharao (Andhra) Mr Ramnath Kalia (Delhi) Mr Panchnatham (Madras), Mr R.K. Pande (Mahakosal), Mr K.D. Dhere (Bombay), Mr Indra Prakash (Punjab), Mr R.A. Kanitkar (Berar), Mr L.V. Paranjpe (CP), Mr Satish Singh (Assam), Mr D.N. Mookerjee (Bengal), Mr K. Shivanandy (Tamil Nad), Mr R.N. Man (Maharashtra), Mr Chandkiran Sharda (Ajmer), Mr Chandralal (NWFP), Kumar Ganganand Sinha (Bihar), Rani Phulkumari of Sherkot (ladies) and Mr G.A. Gavani (Scheduled Caste). Lala Narain Dutt, Dr Gokalchand Narang, Mr Gangaram Khanna and Mr Laxmishanker Verma—nominated members.

Plea for Strong Centre

Major part of Sunday's five hour session was devoted to discussion on two resolutions which emerged from the Subjects Committee after a good deal of debate.

Dr B.S. Moonje moving his resolution on the future constitution of India declared that if the Congress accepted the recent interpretation of His Majesty's Government, it would amount to betrayal by the Congress of millions of Hindus. Dr Moonje said that any constitution without a strong centre would never be acceptable to the Hindu Mahasabha. He assured Congress that the Mahasabha was wholeheartedly behind it for the achievement of India's complete independence.

Other speakers on the resolution advised the Congress not to commit the mistake of coming out of the Constituent Assembly at any stage but to proceed with the formation of the constitution of free India in spite of the Muslim League.

Delegates from Bihar with one voice supported Kunwar Ganganand Sinha's resolution on Bihar disturbances and refuted the accusation that the Hindus had been the aggressors. They urged the Bihar Government to release the "innocent" Hindus arrested in connection with disturbances and help restoring confidence in the minds of the Hindus.

Mookerjee Regrets

Two incidents in which Congress flags were pulled down and replaced by Hindu Mahasabha flags in Malaviyanagar caused a good deal of resentment in local Congress circles.

The first incident was reported on December 26, when the Tricolour flying on a shop in the Mahasabha exhibition was forcibly removed. The exhibition organisers, however, gave an assurance to the shopkeeper that the incident would be investigated. The second incident was reported when the Tricolour in a high school was pulled down.

The President of the Gorakhpur District Congress Committee wrote to Dr S.P. Mookerjee strongly protesting against the attitude of certain Hindu Sabha workers and requesting him to take measures to avoid repetition of such incidents. Dr Mookerjee is understood to have replied regretting the incidents and stating "we never meant any insult to the Congress flag."—API.

2.vii MUSLIM LEAGUE

1. League Celebrates Central Assembly Election Victory

Extracts from a news report, 'League celebrations in Delhi'. *Statesman*, 12 January 1946.

Green was much in evidence in Delhi on Friday, when Muslim League's success in the Central Assembly elections was celebrated. Green bunting, green flags and special gates draped in green gave the city a gala appearance. League slogans were written across some of the gates in big white letters, "Emperor of Pakistan—Mohammad Ali Jinnah Zindabad". Most Muslim shops and houses were illuminated with candles and chirags [lamps]. In almost all predominantly Muslim localities music in one form or the other was provided. At some places bands played, at others gramophones. Poems were recited at street corners, the listeners after each verse raising shouts of Allah-ho-Akbar, Qaid-e-Azam, Mohammad Ali Jinnah Zindabad or Long Live Pakistan.

In some areas sweets were distributed to school children.

"Get back, get back Congress, Pakistan is ours" was a popular air with Muslims as they wended their way home after witnessing a display of fireworks.

In response to Mr Jinnah's appeal, "Victory Day" was celebrated in Bombay on Friday by Muslims....

The Muslim League's victory in the Central Assembly elections was celebrated on Friday by Lahore Muslims in pursuance of the instructions of Mr M.A. Jinnah....

On Friday the Lucknow City Muslim League celebrated the success of League candidates in the Central Assembly elections....

2. Muslim League on the Offensive in the Punjab

Extracts from a news report, 'Punjab premier "puppet leader"'. *Statesman*, 19 January 1946

Lahore, January 18. The Muslim League has got to fight the bureaucracy of the Punjab under the puppet leadership of Malik Khizr Hyat Khan and his associates, said Mr Jinnah in a statement today.

He stated: "Muslim League workers are being coerced, threatened, intimidated and prosecuted. The attention of the Viceroy and the Government of India has been repeatedly drawn to all these machinations and manoeuvres.

"But in spite of all this, I was very glad to see with my own eyes that there is a tremendous upsurge amongst the Muslims....

“Among the parties that will do its best to disrupt Muslims is the so-called Indian National Congress which is neither Indian, nor National nor Congress.

“It is a Fascist grand council, out for caste Hindu Imperialistic domination all over India....

“The Punjab is awake and has understood the machinations and the manoeuvres of the Congress in putting up their stooges, the so-called nationalist Muslims, their creatures and henchmen. There is no such party or organisation as the nationalist Muslims. They have no programme, no creed.

“Similarly the Ahrars, the Khaksars and other mushroom gangs with false labels are nothing but the henchmen of our enemies. I, therefore, appeal to the Muslims of the Punjab not to be misled and vote solid[ly] for the Muslim League official candidates and thus show to India and the world that the Muslim League alone commands the confidence of the overwhelming majority of the Muslims and is their sole authoritative organisation and that we stand unequivocally and determinedly for our cherished goal of Pakistan....

3. Muslim League Activities in the United Provinces

Extracts from Weekly Report No. 6, 8 February 1946. CID Records, Government of the United Provinces (1946); Uttar Pradesh State Archives.

... The Punjab has asked for more Aligarh students for League propaganda. The Saharanpur Muslim League Political Conference was held on February 1, 2 and 3 ... when Rs 2500 were collected for the election fund. Communal speeches were delivered and resolutions were passed demanding Pakistan sympathising with the Arabs of Palestine, condemning Government for reducing the wheat ration and urging the proscription of Chapter XIV of *Satyartha Prakash*.

4. Muslims of the Punjab Reject Unionists in Elections

Extracts from a news report, ‘Well done, Punjab’. *Dawn*, 22 February 1946.

Election results continue to pour in from the Punjab bearing the glad tiding that the citadel of the Unionists has already fallen. All the results are not yet in, but the issue is no longer in doubt. Governor Glancy and Premier Khizr Hayat did everything humanly and subhumanly possible to stem the rising tide of popular indignation against the infamous regime with which they had saddled the Punjab for years. The tide would not be resisted. It has engulfed the show-boys of imperialism and anti-national traitors to whom nothing mattered except that they should bask in the sunshine of a British Governor’s favours and flatter themselves with the illusion of power just because they could order a few liveried orderlies about. Khizr Hayat’s and his Unionist Minister’s conception of power was just that; they were content to remain puppets, with the business end of the leading strings in Government House....

... Conspiracy in the Punjab, however, is by no means at an end yet, because the allocation of seats under the Communal Award is in itself an incentive to conspiracy. Although the verdict of Muslim Punjab may be unmistakable and the Muslim League may emerge finally as not only the largest single group in the Assembly but also as the only authoritative and representative party enjoying the confidence of the Muslims, the enemies of the Muslim nation comprising heterogeneous elements may try to flock together with the common purpose of cutting Muslim Punjab’s throat. Already there are indications that they are pinning their faith on the present Governor, whose inexplicable hostility towards the Muslim League is common knowledge.

They are hoping that he will perform an act of constitutional jugglery in their favour. The Englishman, however, has the reputation of knowing when he is beaten and taking the beating like a sportsman. Whether Sir Bertrand Glancy is an Englishman of that traditional type or of some other will shortly be known. We shall have more to say on this subject presently when all the election results have been announced. Meanwhile we need only say: "Well done, Punjab!"

5. League and Congress Discuss Formation of Stable Ministry for the Punjab

Extracts from a press release, 'Mamdot releases his letters to Congress Party leader'.
Dawn, 7 March 1946.

Letter of Nawab of Mamdot, leader of the League Party to Mr Bhim Sen Sachar, leader of the Congress Party dated March 2.

Dear Mr Sachar,

We met and discussed today in the presence of the President of the All-India Congress, Sir Firoz Khan Noon and Sardar Shaukat Hyat Khan the possibilities of the formation of stable Ministry in the province which should include the representatives of the majority community, the Muslims and of the two minorities the Hindus and Sikhs.

The recent elections have clearly demonstrated that the Muslim masses are solidly behind the League whereas the Congress and the Akali Parties enjoy the support of the Hindu and the Sikhs respectively.

In view of this I suggested the formation of a Ministry comprising the nominees of the Muslim League, the Congress and the Akali Parties. It is clear that the close collaboration of these elements can best help us to solve the problems that lie ahead of us to serve the people of the Punjab.

I am writing to inquire whether in the light of this request your party would be willing to lend its support in the formation of such a Ministry.

With regard to the question of the future of the constitution of India which came up for discussion during our conversation I would like to make it clear that the nature of the future constitution of India falls outside the scope of the common policy which the proposed Ministry is to carry out....

Yours sincerely,
Iftikhar Hussain Khan.

Reply of Mr Bhim Sen Sachar, leader of Punjab Assembly Congress Party to Nawab Iftikhar Hussain dated March 4.

Dear Nawab,

With reference to your enquiry whether the Congress Party will lend its support to an arrangement for the 'formation' of a stable Ministry in the province which should include the representatives of the majority community, the Muslims, and of the two minorities, the Hindus and Sikhs, I write to inform you that my party would be glad to consider such a proposal with favour....

I do not accept your contention that “the recent elections have clearly demonstrated that the Muslim masses are solidly behind the League whereas the Congress and the Akali Parties enjoy the support of the Hindus and Sikhs respectively.”

Without however, saying more on this point I have to say that my party would be willing to give a trial to a Cabinet consisting of the nominees of the Congress-cum-Akali Party, and the Muslim League Party on the following terms:

1. Congress-cum-Akali Party and Muslim League Party shall have equal representation in the Cabinet, each party to nominate any Cabinet member it chooses.

2. The question of Pakistan and the allied question of a Constituent Assembly for India shall be left to be determined by the all-India organisations of the Congress, the Muslim League and non-Congress Sikhs and will not be raised in the Punjab Legislative Assembly by either of the parties while the coalition lasts.

3. The programme of the two parties in the Assembly shall be based on the economic programme of the Congress as detailed in the Congress Manifesto aiming to promote all round communal harmony....

Bhim Sen Sachar.

The following is the second letter (undated) of Nawab of Mamdot, leader of the League Party to Mr Sachar, leader of the Congress Party.

Dear Mr Sachar,

... The object of my previous letter to you was to ascertain if the Congress would be willing to nominate representatives for the Hindu seats on the Cabinet as the Congress has established its right during the past provincial elections of representing the Hindus of the Punjab.

I had made a similar request to the Akali Party for the representation of Sikh members in the Cabinet as.... The Muslim League's position is still the same.

I do not, however, understand the significance of the phrase ‘Congress-cum-Akali Party’ used in your letter as I am not aware of the existence of any such party or combination.

Yours sincerely,
Iftikhar Hussain Khan.

6. Non-League Muslims in the Punjab Ministry Unacceptable to Muslim League

Extracts from an editorial, ‘Lord Wavell, we ask you’. *Dawn*, 13 March 1946.

Traitor Khizr has found another one of his kind—traitor Parwar, and Glancy has hastened to instal the two of them as his new Ministers. But the denouement of his [Glancy's] drama of infamous intrigue is not yet. Governor Glancy will shortly quit the scene of his wicked misdeeds but he is obviously bent on crowding his remaining days of power with outrage after outrage against the Musalmans over whom he was appointed by an unsuspecting Sovereign to rule. He has not only been unfaithful to his royal master and disloyal to his oath of office, but also unfair to his successor. He seems to be acting on the principle: “After me the deluge”. The evil that he is doing will inevitably recoil on the head of Sir Evan Jenkins who is to take over Punjab's administration in a few weeks.

Punjab is in ferment. Never, never will Muslims in the heart of Western Pakistan take this affront to them lying down. What this unscrupulous misgovernor says to Muslim Punjab is, in effect: "You may have won your people's votes but I have the British bayonet in my keeping. You shall be governed by the men you hate, because I, the imperialist, hate you." In comparison with Glancy's malevolence Hitler's infamy pales into insignificance. Because Hitler had power, he wanted to impose the authority of his hated henchmen over the peoples of Poland and Czechoslovakia. Britain called it aggression and went to war against Hitler. Punjab's imitation Hitler is guilty of worse aggression against the Muslims of the province....

Is this an earnest [sign?] of Britain's desire to be honest with the Muslims of India? But, perhaps, it is not the Muslims you care for. Your country's urgent need is for a business deal with Hindu India's big business. Any port in a storm seems to be her motto, and she thinks she will find a secure haven in the folds of Mr Gandhi's loincloth. What other conclusion can Muslims draw when they are so treacherously betrayed in the Punjab?

So be it, then; but let the British and their local representative remember who cast the first stone. The Muslim is not bred on goat's milk. He does not sit down to nurse the injured spot but goes and finds out where the blow came from. And then he knows what to do....

7. Radical Muslim Leaguers Ask for Hindu-Muslim Unity

Extracts from a news report, 'Fight against the British and the Hindu capitalist!' *Free Press Journal*, 13 March 1946.

Lahore, March 12. A passionate appeal for Hindu-Muslim unity was made by Mian Ifikharuddin, MLA (Muslim League) addressing a mammoth gathering here.

Mian Ifikharuddin said, "The sweeping victory of the Muslim League at the polls should be a source of happiness for the Hindus as the Indian Muslims by giving their clear verdict in favour of the Muslim League have demonstrated to the world that they now fully realise the implications of the present political issues in India and will not lag behind the Hindus in their common struggle for freedom."

"Today our fight is directed" added Mian Ifikharuddin "not against the Hindus but against British Imperialism and Hindu capitalism. The Muslims of India stand on the threshold of a new era in their national life. They are fully prepared for the coming struggle, but there is a catch in the way of this struggle which if not guarded against, will lead to the collapse of our whole struggle and it will end in a fiasco. This catch is the grave danger of a Hindu-Muslim civil war."

"If instead of concentrating our energies and attention against British and the Hindu capitalist we are drawn into an internecine warfare [internecine warfare], our energies will simply fizzle out. But if on the other hand we take the Hindu masses with us, the freedom of India will shortly be achieved...."

8. Muslim League Rejects Congress Muslim Nominee in the Punjab Ministry

Extracts from a news report, 'League policy is not to have Muslim Quislings'. *Dawn*, 20 March 1946.

Mr M.A. Jinnah, President of the All India Muslim League, reports the API from New Delhi, in a rejoinder on Tuesday to the Congress President's explanation of the formation of the

Punjab Ministry says: "The Muslim League has adopted the only course open to it and refused to have a Congressite Muslim Nominee because firstly, he would have played the role of a Quisling and we want to do away with Quislings....

"The Congress is a Hindu organisation and the leader of the Muslim League, was willing to give the Hindu quota to the Congress Party which is entirely Hindu but not to any Muslim Quisling in the Congress.

"This proposal to have a Congress Quisling nominated in the Ministry was insidious and made with a sinister motive. Further if we were to agree to that course it will encourage nondescript Muslims, careerists and self-seekers for the sake of the prospects of office and jobs and they will go into the Congress camp....

9. Jinnah Attempts to Break the Punjab Coalition

News report, 'Jinnah leaves the Punjab empty-handed'. *Hindustan Times*, 27 March 1946.

Lahore, March 26. Mr Jinnah's political mission to the Punjab has been a dismal failure; he flew back yesterday afternoon knowing that while he had not been able to establish a League Ministry in the Punjab—this was the avowed purpose of his visit—the only League Ministry in India, in Sind had been defeated.

On his arrival here, Mr Jinnah announced his willingness to concede Sikhistan. This gesture was primarily intended to wean away the Akali Party from the Ministry and thus break up the Coalition Government.

But despite repeated requests, Master Tara Singh, Akali leader, refused to meet Mr Jinnah. "Why don't you come and see me", asked Master Tara Singh in response to the invitation from Mr Jinnah. This was too much for the Qaid-e-Azam, who has not deigned to visit even Gandhiji.

Next, Mr Jinnah's emissaries approached the Scheduled Caste leaders who refused to discuss politics with them.

Overtures were also made to independent members but of no avail.

The League members concerted efforts to intimidate Muslim Unionists in the Assembly have also borne no fruit.

10. Muslim League Legislators' Convention

Extracts from a news report, 'League dream of a Muslim empire'. *Hindustan Times*, 10 April 1946.

New Delhi, Thursday. "We stand for one leader, one voice, one aim.... The resolution is not our last demand; it is our latest demand.... We ask for a small corner at present; if you wage war against us I am not prepared to forecast the future." declared Mr S.H. Suhrawardy, the Bengal gauleiter of the League Fuehrer. in moving the main resolution today at the Muslim League Legislators' Convention.

"Muslims masses are straining at the leash. I call upon the Qaid-e-Azam to test us. Muslims want to be the ruling race in this subcontinent," added Mr Suhrawardy, whose entire speech was as fiery and violent as ever heard even from the Muslims League platform.

Chaudhry Khaliq uz-Zaman, who seconded the resolution, made a violent attack on the Hindu religion and on several Congress leaders. He said: "Muslims have been called *goondas* and Hindus cowards. Well, in a state of anarchy it is the *goonda* who has the upper hand."

The main resolution has a long preamble painting the Hindu religion in the darkest and Islam in the most glorious colours. It tries to establish a case for a theocratic State for Muslims....

11. The Punjab Muslim League Purges Communists

Extracts from a report, 'Red bogey in Punjab league'. *People's Age*, 9 June 1946.

On May 19, a heated discussion took place in the Provincial Council of the Punjab Muslim League. Newspapers flashed the news that an anti-Communist resolution had been discussed, that the League was "getting wise to the Reds"....

Why This Right-About Turn

What has happened between 1944-45 and 1946?

As soon as the League broke with the Unionists, a number of progressive Muslims from all parties—Congress, Ahrars, Khaksars, Communists—joined the League, because they expected that now that the Provincial League had broken with the bureaucracy-ridden Unionists, it could and would become an organisation of the people.

These cadres took the League into the Punjab villages and built it up as a mass organisation. They suffered untold hardships, the full weight of Unionist repression fell on their heads. One of them, Abdul Malik, spent six months in jail for the League cause—the first and most important League political prisoner in the Punjab.

Now Progressives Main Target of ICS

These new cadres with real experience of anti-Imperialist struggle were the dread of the bureaucracy.

And immediately the toadies began a campaign against them, dubbing them Communists and accusing the League leadership of being under their influence and so on.

But the League leaders fought back all these attacks and continued to make full use of the capabilities of their new workers. Time and again they acknowledged that these workers had contributed a great deal to the building of the League.

During the elections, these young progressive workers were organisers in certain key constituencies, though not one of them was selected as a candidate by the League Parliamentary Board, which preferred feudal moneyed parasites to hardworking men of the people. The proof of their work lies in the overwhelming electoral success of the Punjab League.

But when after the elections, the League failed in its intrigues, and a Congress-Unionist Government was formed, there was extreme demoralisation in the Ministry-seeking leaders.

Not a single one of them has visited his constituency after the elections. All their election promises are in the storehouse.

The tremendous possibilities of building up the League organisation after the gains of the elections have been completely ignored.

Sitting in their palatial houses in Lahore, the League's landlord leaders are dreaming all the time of Ministerial *gaddis*.

This was an excellent opportunity for the bureaucracy, which was alarmed beyond measure at the growth of the League it had witnessed during the elections. It had seen the traditionally loyal Punjabi Muslims stand up against the orders of their officials and vote League.

Repression they knew would not smash the League—it would make it more anti-Imperialist.

Campaign to Split League

So they planned to split the League by renewing the Red bogey campaign with the help of their agents inside and outside the League. Thus they hoped to make the League safe for reactionaries like Sir Firoz Khan Noon, who had hurled themselves into the League just before the elections.

All this happened in the background of the Cabinet Mission's visit.

I am reliably informed that certain important all-India League leaders told the Punjab Leaguers quite categorically that it was necessary to make it clear to the British that the League, "like the Congress," was anti-Communist and so also anti-Soviet, "otherwise the British will think the Congress more useful than us."

And so Raja Ghazanfar Ali, on behalf of the Working Committee, moved the Red bogey resolution in the Provincial League Council.

Strong Opposition from All Sections

The first man to oppose the resolution was Sheikh Karamat Ali (Member of the All India League Working Committee) who said: "This resolution has no meaning, as the constitution of the League makes it clear that no member of any other political party is entitled to become its member."

Mr Fahaiddin Shah Gilani, Multan League leader, said: "This resolution will give the reactionaries a plea to drive anybody out of the League. If I do not agree with you and you dislike me, you would just give me a bad name in order to hang me. Don't close the door of this League to other parties whom we should welcome to our national organisation".

Mian Iftikharuddin made a strong speech against the resolution. "I am ashamed that such a resolution has been brought at a meeting of the Council of the Muslim League—which is a democratic organisation.

"Everyone knows that I am a sympathiser of the Communist Party though I have never been its member. I have no hesitation in saying that the Communist Party has always advocated a sound programme for Hindu-Muslim unity.

"When I was in the Congress, in my attempts for a Congress-League settlement, they were the only people to give me the fullest support.

"They are again the only people outside the Muslim League who have a sympathetic attitude towards the League and advocate the right of self-determination as a basis for Congress-League settlement.

"And today they are being singled out for attack by the League.

"The people against whom the attack is meant are known even by the members of the League Working Committee as the men who did the best work at the time of the elections.

"While a resolution is being brought against the Communists, I know for certain that there are agents of the Unionist Party and even CID men in the Muslim League. The resolution is silent about them."

Iftikharuddin Cheered

Mian Iftikharuddin's speech voiced the feelings of a very large section of the House and he was cheered repeatedly.

Seeing the temper of the members, Raja Ghazanfar Ali made an appeal to the House to adopt the resolution as otherwise it would mean a vote of no confidence in the Working Committee.

"Such a fantastic resolution cannot be adopted just because throwing it out would mean no confidence in the High Command," shouted a number of back-bench members.

The Nawab of Mamdot had to adjourn the meeting without taking any decision.

The resolution will now be taken up at the next meeting of the council in October.

Undoing Past Work

If the Punjab League leaders continue this shameless kowtowing to the bureaucracy, they will destroy all that they have built and inevitably divide the League....

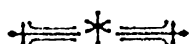
12. Muslim League Resolution on Direct Action Day

Text of resolution passed a meeting of the Muslim League Council at Bombay on 29 July 1946. *Indian Annual Register* (1946); Vol. II, p. 177.

Resolution on Direct Action

Whereas the All India Muslim League has today resolved to reject the proposals embodied in the statement of the Cabinet Delegation and the Viceroy dated May 16, 1946, due to the intransigence of the Congress on the one hand and the breach of faith with the Muslims by the British Government on the other; and whereas Muslim India has exhausted without success all efforts to find a peaceful solution of the Indian problem by compromise and constitutional means; and whereas the Congress is bent upon setting up a Caste Hindu Raj in India with the connivance of the British and whereas recent events have shown that power politics and not justice and fairplay are deciding factors in Indian affairs; and whereas it has become abundantly clear that the Muslims of India would not rest content with anything less than the immediate establishment of an independent and full sovereign state of Pakistan and would resist any attempt to impose any constitution, long-term or short-term, or setting up of any Interim Government at the Centre without the approval and consent of the Muslim League, the Council of the All India Muslim League is convinced that now the time has come for the Muslim nation to resort to direct action to achieve Pakistan and assert their just rights and to vindicate their honour and to get rid of the present slavery under the British and contemplated future caste-Hindu domination. This Council calls upon the Muslim nation to stand to a man behind their sole representative organisation, the All India Muslim League, and be ready for every sacrifice. This Council directs the Working Committee to prepare forthwith a programme of direct action to carry out the policy initiated above and to organise the Muslims for the coming struggle to be launched as and when necessary.

As a protest against and in token of their deep resentment of the attitude of the British, this Council calls upon the Muslims to renounce forthwith the title[s] conferred upon them by the alien Government.



13. Muslim League Enters Interim Government

Newspaper cuttings enclosed in the file. File No. G-53; All India Hindu Mahasabha Papers (1946); Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

(a) *'League in Office to Work for Pakistan', Sunday Statesman, 20 October 1946*

Lahore, Oct. 19. Mr Ghazanfar Ali Khan, member-designate of the new Central Government, addressing the Islamia College students here today declared: "We are going into the Interim Government to get a foothold to fight for our cherished goal of Pakistan, and I assure you that we shall achieve Pakistan."

Mr Ghazanfar Ali Khan who is an old boy of the college, said: "The disturbances which have occurred in many parts of the country after the installation of the purely Congress Government at the Centre have established the fact, beyond any shadow of doubt, that the 10 crores of Indian Muslims will not submit to any Government which does not include their true representatives. The Congress should realise, and the earlier the better, that no power can suppress the upsurge of freedom among the Muslims. We irrevocably stand for Pakistan as our ultimate goal and I assure you that under the leadership of Qaid-e-Azam Jinnah we shall achieve our goal."

"In the Interim Government," he said, "all our activities shall be guided by two considerations: that is, to convince the Congress that no Government in India can function smoothly without the cooperation of the Muslim League, and that the League is the sole representative organisation of the Indian Muslims. The Interim Government is one of the fronts of the direct action campaign and we shall most scrupulously carry out the orders of Mr Jinnah on any front that we are called upon to serve."

Mr Ghazanfar Ali characterised the inclusion of a Scheduled Caste member in the Muslim League quota as a gesture of goodwill towards the downtrodden people which, he said, had been widely appreciated by Muslims all over the province.

"The Muslim League today," he asserted, "stands for the rights of all backward and neglected people. When we attain Pakistan the minorities therein shall be treated in the same manner as shown by Mr Jinnah in including a Scheduled Caste member in the Interim Government on behalf of the Muslim League."

(b) *'Rioters Warned', Hindustan Times, 20 October 1946*

One hundred thousand leaflets in Bengali were dropped by an RAF plane on Friday. Over 200 square miles of affected area in Noakhali and Tipperah districts containing "an appeal and a warning" from Bengal's Chief Minister, Mr H.S. Suhrawardy, to the people of the area.

The leaflet said: "Reports that have come to me from Noakhali and areas contiguous to it are particularly distressing and outrageous. What is worse is that some Muslims are exploiting the name of the Muslim League and carrying on propaganda in the name of the Muslim League. The Muslim League has not sanctioned any act of oppression against the Hindus. I condemn all such acts of oppression and atrocities most wholeheartedly. I do so not only as the Chief Minister but also as a member of the Muslim League and a true Muslim. Those who are arousing Muslims by oppressing the Hindus are misleading the people. There is no justification whatsoever for doing so. All such acts cause damage to the League and to the cause of the Muslims."

"I am told that my Government will not take action against those who break the law in the name of the Muslim League," the leaflet added. "Nothing can be farther from the truth. It is my duty to preserve law and order and peace and punish those who break the law and I shall have to do so on an even and just hand on whichever party breaks the law, Hindu or Muslim.

"Referring to the political situation in India, Mr Suhrawardy said: "The Muslim League has joined the Interim Government and is sharing with the Congress power and responsibility for the administration of India. This must contribute to bring about a feeling of cooperation between the two communities in all the provinces. If anything goes wrong the Muslim League also shares the responsibility for it. Till now there was a feeling that the Muslim League was kept out of the Central Government. But there should be no justification for such a feeling now. Hindus and Muslims must learn to live side by side and work in cooperation for the sake of a better Bengal."

14. Khaksar Activities in the United Provinces

Extracts from Weekly Report No. 42, 1 November 1946. CID Records, Government of the United Provinces (1946); Uttar Pradesh State Archives.

... Aligarh Khaksars, at their private meetings, are reported to have decided to renounce the leadership of Allama Mashriqi and to instal Mian Ahmad Shah, a Barrister of Peshawar, in his place; it is also said to have been decided, that though Khaksars should not identify themselves with any political affairs, their policy should be one of non-opposition to the Muslim organisations....

15. Muslim League Activities in the United Provinces

Extracts from Weekly Report No. 47, 6 December 1946. CID Records, Government of the United Provinces (1946); Uttar Pradesh State Archives.

... The Muslim League has been active in only three districts. At Azamgarh this party is raising subscriptions for the purchase of two motor lorries, which are to be used for transporting stranded Muslims in times of communal disturbances. When addressing a congregation [of] 300 at the Jama Masjid at Budaun, on 6 December, one Mulla Abdul Samad Muqtever described the riot at Garhmukteshar as a premeditated affair, accused the students of the Lakhawati College and the RSS of taking an active part in killing Muslims and criticised the Hon'ble Minister, Home, for not taking the same disciplinary action against the Lakhawati College as he did against the Aligarh University for lesser offences....

16. Muslim League Activities in the United Provinces

Extracts from Weekly Report No. 49, 27 December 1946. CID Records, Government of the United Provinces (1946); Uttar Pradesh State Archives.

... The Agra and Jhansi Muslim League agitation which was originally directed against the Gwalior State for alleged atrocities against Muslims now involves the Kapurthala State also for similar reasons and has spread to Cawnpore where a few leaflets issued by Jhansi Muslims were received. An appeal is made in these leaflets for funds for the relief of Gwalior Muslims....

2.viii OTHER MINORITY GROUPS AND SCHEDULED CASTES

1. Jalandhar Meeting of Minority Groups Opposed to Pakistan

Extracts from a newsletter, 'Take up Gandhiji's constructive programme'. *Hindustan Times*, 3 January, 1946.

Jullunder, February 1. During the week Baba Kharak Singh, a veteran Akali leader, Maulana Habibur Rahman, an Ahrar leader, Mrs Rameshwari Nehru, MLA (Congress), and Mr P.K. Sahgal visited Jullunder and addressed meetings.

Baba Kharak Singh in his speech gave an account of the part played by Sikhs in India's struggle for freedom. He criticised Master Tara Singh and the Akali Dal. He said that though Master Tara Singh was never tired of telling people that he and his Dal were opposed to Pakistan he made pacts with the League Ministry in the Frontier and supported Sardar Baldev Singh in the Punjab....

2. Only Bona-fide Sikhs

Extracts from a representation by the Shiromani Gurudwara Prabandhak Committee, Amritsar, to the Home Secretary, Government of India; Amritsar 19 January 1946. File No. 31/5/46; Home (Establishments) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Amritsar, 19-1-1946.

Dear Sir,

... I have been directed by the Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee to request you to issue directions to all departmental heads to see that only bona fide Sikhs are appointed against posts reserved for the Sikh Community. More often than not 'Patits', i.e., apostates who have deserted Sikh Faith by getting their hair or beard removed successfully deceive the appointing authorities and thereby usurp the rights of bona fide Sikhs.

Sadhu Swarup Singh,
Asstt. Secretary,
Education & Industry Deptt.,
Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee,
Amritsar.

3. Akalis Demand a Sikh State within India

News report, 'Sikhs demand separate state within Indian federation'. *Hindustan Times*, 1 April 1946.

Lahore, March 30. Sikhs' demands in the future constitution of India were clarified by Giani Kartar Singh, MLA, a prominent Akali leader, in an interview.

Giani Kartar Singh said: "Our demand is for 'a Sikh State'. In the resolution which embodied the demand the Shiromani Akali Dal did not use the word 'sovereign' or 'independent' as this necessitates partitioning."

Explaining the term "Sikh State" he said it would be "a sort of one unit of the Indian federation".

Giani Kartar Singh concluded: "We don't want to take the responsibility for partitioning of India but if for some reasons India was forced to be partitioned then we will have a sovereign state."—API.

4. All Party Sikh Conference Opposes Akali Dal and the Partitioning of India

News report, 'Sikh opposition to division of India'. *Hindustan Times*, 30 April, 1946.

Rawalpindi, April 29. Grim determination to resist Pakistan at all costs was expressed by Sardar Amar Singh while performing the flag hoisting ceremony on the occasion of an all-Party Sikh Conference which began here last night.

About 150 delegates from several places in Rawalpindi division and over 100 INA men belonging to Rawalpindi district attended. Sardar Sardul Singh Caveeshar, President of the All India Forward Bloc, presided.

The Sikhs' ideal was a free and united India, said Sardar Amar Singh, adding that the Sikh flag was their religious emblem, the Tricolour their political and national flag. The existence of the Sikh Panth was based on national ideologies. Guru Govind Singh was the first founder of the Indian nation and as such it was the duty of the Sikhs to follow the Congress and strive for a free and Akhand Hindustan.

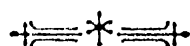
Tool of the British

Master Mota Singh Anandpuri, inaugurating the conference, stressed the need for a United India, unequivocally condemned the present programme and policy of the Akali leadership and opposed the establishment of a Sikh State as initiated by Akali Dal. He said that Guru Govind Singh was the real founder of the Indian nation and the present Akali Dal was not Guru Govind Singh's Akali Dal but an organisation set up to benefit the British.

Sardar Uttam Singh Duggal, Chairman of the Reception Committee, in his address gave some facts and figures to prove that Sikh State was a misnomer adding that it could not be established anywhere. He further stated that the Sikhs of Rawalpindi, Lahore and Multan divisions would be left at the mercy of the Pakistan Government along with their prominent shrines. He also exposed the hollowness of the Pakistan claim of the Muslim League.

Charter of Demands

Concluding, Sardar Uttam Singh presented a charter of the Sikh demands which included independence of the united India, adequate safeguards for important minorities, in provinces and Centre, one-third representation of Sikhs in the Punjab Cabinet, five per cent representation and one seat in Central Government, and a guarantee for united India and united Punjab. He alleged that the Akali Party was out to destroy the solidarity of the Panth and the country both.



5. Akalis Demand Equal Status with Muslims

Extracts from a news report, 'Universal Sikh protest against Mission's plan'. *Hindustan Times*, 29 May, 1946.

Rawalpindi, May 28. The determination to vindicate the honour of the Panth and Khalsa by making the greatest sacrifices was reiterated by Master Tara Singh, Akali leader, in a fighting speech on Sunday at a largely attended public meeting held to protest against the constitutional proposals of the British Cabinet Mission, following instructions issued by the Shiromani Akali Dal. The Nationalist Sikhs joined in the protest....

Although a regular charter of demands of Sikhs would be formulated by a big Panthic gathering, representing all groups of the community, which is meeting at Amritsar on June 10 Master Tara Singh stated that Sikhs would not be satisfied unless they got all the weightage and veto power granted to the Muslims in the two independent autonomous units.

Sardar Uttam Singh Duggal, Nationalist, President of the local Singh Sabha, who presided over the meeting, pleaded for unity and appealed to the Congress to redeem their pledge of 1929 given to the Sikhs.

A resolution condemning the Cabinet Mission's proposals and appealing to the Congress to reject them was unanimously adopted.

A resolution condemning the Cabinet Mission's proposals and appealing to the Congress to reject them was unanimously adopted.

A resolution condemning the proposals, which place the entire "Sikh community under perpetual Muslim domination" was passed at a big diwan held at Campbellopur on Sunday under the auspices of Shri Gurusingh Sabha. It was resolved that "the Sikhs are willing and ready to make every sacrifice in pursuance of the Shiromani Akali Dal's orders to resist such proposals."

Similar protest resolutions were passed at Sikh's meetings at Dehra Dun, Gujranawala, Kahuta, Sukho, Mirpirkhas, Aligarh, Patiala and Indore.

6. All Party Panthic Conference for Direct Action Against Cabinet Mission

Extracts from a news report, 'All-Parties Panthic Conference leaders to take oath before Akal Takht today'. *Bombay Chronicle*, 11 June 1946.

Amritsar, June 9, (API): The determination of the Sikhs, one of the martial races in India, to shed the last drop of their blood to fight the Cabinet Mission's proposals was expressed by leaders of all Sikh parties and groups at the Panthic Conference which opened here today in Tejasingh Samundri Hall.

Four concrete decisions which seem to have been reached so far but not formally announced were hinted at by two or three speakers.

One is about the formation of Council of Action representative of all group and parties to direct the whole campaign (*Morcha*), whatever form it might take with Jathedar Udham Singh Nagok, MLA, (Panthic) as its first dictator or President.

Second: recruitment of at least two lakh of volunteers to participate in the *Morcha*. This number is equivalent to the number of Sikhs who joined the Indian Army during the war.

Third is that an appeal will be made to Sikh Government or other servants who are unable to make any other sacrifice, to contribute at least one month's salary to this *Morcha* and

Fourth: that a pledge be signed before Akal that those joining such *Morcha* do so with determination to face death in order to secure relief from this injustice.

The Tejasingh Hall was packed by over one thousand Sikh leaders representing Akalis, Congress Sikhs, Namdaris, Nirmalas, Chief Khalsa Dewan, Singh Sabhas, District Akali Jathas from all over the Punjab, North West Frontier Province, Delhi, UP and other Places.

Those present included Master Tara Singh, Sardar Baldev Singh, Punjab Minister. His Holiness Maharaja Pratapsingh.

Master Tara Singh, the Akali leader, who had placed the case of the Sikhs before the British Cabinet Mission addressing the Panthic Conference warned the British that they should realise that the Sikhs could do more harm than the Muslims if enraged. Unless the Sikhs started some direct action, he felt, the British Government would not concede their just rights.

As it was, there were only two ways open to the Sikhs either to finish the British or be finished themselves....

Col. Gill of the INA said that the Singapore opportunity of 1942 had come in their way again and he expressed the readiness of his comrades to make supreme sacrifices at the behest of the Panth and the country....

While the conference was on, Sardar Baldev Singh, the Akali Minister, told a group of newsmen that "most of the representatives are in favour of direct action to resist the British Cabinet plan, while there is a small but influential minority which is opposed to this move."

Sardar Baldev Singh Said: "The Sikhs are in a desperate mood but I cannot say now what steps they would take to combat the plan." ...

7. Panthic Sikh Conference Demands a Sikh State

Extracts from a news report, 'Sikhs demand separate state'. *Hindustan Times*, 11 June 1946

Amritsar, June 10. Delegates and visitors to the Panthic Sikh Congress, in session here since yesterday, are studying and discussing a freely distributed 16 page pamphlet: "Fight This Charter of Slavery," signed by the Akali leader, Master Tara Singh, and six others. It carries a powerful denunciation of the British Cabinet Mission's proposals and lays down on behalf of the Sikhs three alternative terms by which they "can escape out of this slavery."

Eight hundred representatives drawn from all over the Punjab, NWFP, Delhi and the United Provinces met here yesterday in the lap of their holy shrine--the Golden Temple--in the heart of the city of Amritsar, in a belligerent mood to take decisions on resisting the British Cabinet Plan.

Teja Singh Hall where the Congress opened, resounded time and again with the popular Sikh War cry 'Bolo so Nihal--Sat Sri Akal' as speaker after speaker denounced the British proposal and exhorted his compatriots "to stake all" in the struggle "that is to come soon to protect the glory of the Panth."

Charging the British Cabinet Ministers in India with "playing their own game and not ours," the pamphlet exhorts the Sikhs to "fight for our lives with our backs to the wall,"

Describing the proposals as a lease for enslaving the Sikhs, the pamphlet says: "Out of all this slavery we can escape only if we get one of the following and in no other way:

(1) A Sikh State in the Central, Eastern and Northern Punjab.

(2) A division of the Punjab at the Chenab in order to create a province in which no one community will dominate and which the Sikhs can call their own and where they can have an effective share in the administration.

(3) A substantial share, which must in no way be below 70 per cent in the Legislature and the Government of the Punjab, and with vetoing power to the Sikhs in the Punjab and in the Union Centre on Sikh questions such as given to the Muslims on Muslim questions in the All India Centre."

"These are our clear-cut demands. Let there be found no Sikh who will not own up to all or anyone of them."

The statement says the British Ministers' appeal to the Muslim aristocracy and middle-class by giving them power in the North-West and North-East has made these classes into faithful allies of Britain in any struggle against and power like Russia.

"They have, similarly," the statement adds, "given power to the Hindu middle-class in the six Congress provinces and in the Centre, of which power the Muslims have a considerable though not equal share with the Hindus at the Centre." ...

8. Panthic Boards to Boycott Constituent Assembly

Extracts from a news report, 'Sikhs to boycott Constituent Assembly'. *Bombay Chronicle*, 11 July 1946.

Lahore. July 10. The representative gathering of Sikhs which was presided over by the Sikh Dictator, Col. Gill. Unanimously decided to boycott the Constituent Assembly contrary to expectations.

The recommendations of the subcommittee which was appointed yesterday to find out an agreed formula were not accepted.

What led the Sikhs to boycott the Constituent Assembly, it is learnt, was that Master Tara Singh threatened to go on hunger strike if the Sikhs decided to enter the Constituent Assembly....

9. B.R. Ambedkar Charges British Government with Breach of Faith

News report, 'Ambedkar threat of countrywide satyagraha'. *Bombay Chronicle*, 18 July 1946.

Bombay, July 17: A warning that the present Satyagraha movement launched by the representatives of the All India Scheduled Caste Federation at Poona ultimately will become countrywide in the "same form of the struggle launched by the Congress in August 1942" came from Dr B.R. Ambedkar, President of the Federation.—API.

Only the Beginning

"This is only the beginning of our struggle," Dr Ambedkar said in an interview with the APA. "When the struggle is forced to take the form of the Congress movement, we will do everything as the Congress did in the August disturbances."

Dr Ambedkar described the Scheduled Castes demonstrations now going on in Poona as "a protest against the breaking of every sort of promise given to the Scheduled Castes by the

British Government during the last 20 years. It is a complete breach of faith of our community of which Britain stands guilty before the bar of world opinion."

"Unless and until we secure recognition as a minority entitled to protection and safeguards in the constitution, this struggle will continue and probably will take a much more virulent form than it has taken so far," he continued. "When the present Assembly Session in Poona is over, the fight will be continued elsewhere in a different form. Then it will be time for the provinces to launch a countrywide struggle against the unjust proposals of the British Government."

Rationing, a Handicap

He said it was the intention of the Federation to continue the demonstrations at Poona in the present form of sending small groups to offer Satyagraha. "The main difficulty against a large scale struggle in Poona at present is rationing," he added. "Otherwise we would have had a very much bigger demonstration."

Asked whether he provisionally planned to offer Satyagraha in the near future, the Scheduled Castes Federation Leader replied: "It is not necessary for a general to be present on the battlefield. I have got trusted lieutenants who look after the struggle and, certainly, when the development of events necessitates my presence there and my taking part in the struggle, I will be on the scene."

"At present I get all the latest information on the struggle from a personal messenger despatched daily from Poona."

Dr Ambedkar said he tentatively plans to leave for Poona on Sunday "to see things personally." He said he has received no invitation from Mr Gandhi or any top rank Congressmen, "to open talks for a settlement of the affair."

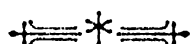
Absolute Breach of Faith

He added the Federation, however, was willing to start negotiations with the parties concerned. Dr Ambedkar continued: "I would like to point out clearly that the Scheduled Castes in this country think that Mr Gandhi agreed to accept the long-term proposals of the British Cabinet mainly on the ground that the British Ministers agreed to ignore the Scheduled Castes. That is what Mr Gandhi found to be the greatest advantage in the long-term proposals notwithstanding their vicious character, of which Congress leaders themselves have spoken so much recently. The British Government have agreed to sacrifice the "Scheduled Castes in order to win over the Congress, and this I charge is absolute breach of faith," he asserted.

Direct Action

"I want to make one point quite clear to all concerned," Dr Ambedkar said. "We like this country to progress as much as anybody else does. We do not want to stand in the way of that. All we want is that our position is safeguarded in the future India."

"To this end, we will take part in every kind of struggle against the British proposals of May 16. If the Muslim League starts any Direct Action, we will be with them. If the Sikhs decide upon launching direct struggle against the British—I fully support the stand taken by the Sikhs at present—then they will also get our support in their action."



10. Sikhs to Enter Constituent Assembly

Extracts from a news report, 'Sikhs fall in line'. *Bombay Chronicle*, 15 August 1946.

Amritsar, August 14 (API): The Sikhs have decided to enter the Constituent Assembly "when the opportunity comes" and to enter the Interim Government. After deliberations lasting two days, the supreme body of the Sikh community, the Panthic Board, sitting at the Golden temple decided to withdraw their previous decision to boycott the Assembly.

The decision was reached after two day's deliberations lasting altogether 12 hours and with the authority of fifty of the foremost leaders of the community....

11. Increased Representation of Scheduled Castes in Executive Council

Extracts from a news report, 'Hindu-Muslim parity at centre not justified'. *Hindustan Times*, 27 August 1946.

Poona, August 26. "We think there is justification for Pakistan but there is no justification for the Muslims to be given parity with the Caste Hindus, nor any justification for restricting the representation of the other minorities to four only, when one of them, namely the Scheduled Castes, number more than 50 per cent of the total population of the Muslims," said Dr B.R. Ambedkar, interviewed on the formation of the Interim Government....

"More surprising than this is the acceptance by Mr Jagjivan Ram of the offer made to him to join the Executive Council. When I sent a wire to the British Prime Minister protesting against the inadequacy of representation to the Scheduled Classes in the Executive Council, Mr Jagjivan Ram issued a statement to the Press supporting the claim made by me on behalf of the Scheduled Classes for increased representation in the Executive Council. That Mr Jagjivan Ram should have accepted the invitation, notwithstanding the fact that the Congress has not agreed to increased representation to the Scheduled Classes, shows to what extent he can be expected to stand up for the rights of the Scheduled Classes....

12. Gurkhas Protest the Ban on *Kukris* in Calcutta

Letter by the General Secretary, All India Gurkha League, Calcutta, to the Police Commissioner, Calcutta; Calcutta, 14 October 1946. File No. 21/97/46; Home (Police) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Calcutta,
14th October 1946.

Sir,

May I take the liberty of approaching you with humble submission craving your indulgence to the following which concerns the life and death question of the entire Gurkha Community:

That, our Religious Symbol *Khukries* are being snatched away from the person of innocent but loyal and law-abiding Gurkhas by the personnel of the Calcutta Police on the strength of promulgation of Sec. 144 (CrPC).

While we appreciate the promulgation of Sec. 144, which is greatly responsible for keeping the innocent millior lives safe from hooligans' daggers, we are amazed to see that our simple

illiterate and innocent Gurkhas are being victimised by being deprived of their Khukries, simply because they have nothing to do with the recent communal riots of this vast city.

That, the Gurkhas are the religious followers of Gorakhnath, whom you call also Pashupatinath. Lord Pashupatinath is worshipped by every Gurkha—men, women and children, with a Khukri carrying on waist. As without a Kirpan a Sikh does not think his daily worship of his Lord is carried fully, so is the case with a Gurkha and his Khukuri. The same curved Khukuri of the sturdy Gurkha soldiers has been responsible for defending the benign British Government through first and second world wars. In no previous cases the Gurkhas were deprived of their religious and National Symbol Khukuries.

In the case of the Sikh's Kirpan, your honour was pleased to exempt them from Section 144. The religious sentiments of the loyal Gurkha have been touched since their Khukuries in more than one case have not been restored by the Calcutta Police to the owners.

I therefore, solicit the favour of kindly exempting the Gurkhas Khukuries from Section 144 (CrPC).

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

Illegible.

General Secretary,

The All India Gurkha League,

Calcutta.

2.ix BRITISH RESPONSES

1. Can Government Servants Stand for Election to the Legislature?

In response to an enquiry raised by the Railway Department, the Establishments Section, Home Department, Government of India, prepared the following note, 19 March 1946. File No. 47/9/46; Home (Establishments) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Home Department

Under Rule 23 of the present Government Servants Conduct Rules, Government servants are definitely debarred from standing for election to the Legislatures though Government may permit a Government servant to stand for election to local bodies. The Government Servants Conduct Rules are under revision but there is no proposal to relax the ban. Sections 69(1)(a) and 26(1)(a) of the Government of India Act 1935 disqualify any holder of an office of profit under the Crown in India, other than an office declared by the Legislature concerned to be exempt for the purpose from standing for election. It would appear from page 1-3/cor that on a suggestion from the Government of Bombay the Railway Department agreed, with the concurrence of the Reforms Office, to allow the employees of State Railways to stand for election to the Provincial Legislature, if the Provincial Legislature declared them exempt from provisions of Section 69(1)(a) of the Government of India Act. The Railway Department have accordingly felt the necessity of amending the Railway Servants Conduct rules (which at present conform to the Government Servant Conduct Rules) to bring it in line with the relaxation of Section 69(1)(a) of the Act.

2. On our side there has been no relaxation of the embargo on Government servants in this respect and the necessity for amending the Government Servant Conduct Rules in this connection has not therefore arisen. The Railway Department have however their own Railway Servants Conduct Rules which can be amended without prejudice or reference to our Government Servants Conduct Rules, if that Department so desire. The Reforms Sectt. may also kindly see for advice.

B.D. Tewari.
19.3.1946.

2. Can Government Servants Become Members of Communal Organisations?

Extracts from notes circulated within the Establishments Section, Home Department, Government of India; 20 March 1946. File No. 47/22/46; Home (Establishments) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

... The case has become ancient; but the question raised in HM's [Home Member's] Minute dated 19-7-44 whether by virtue of rule 17 of the Government Servants' Conduct Rules, 1935, a Government Servant is precluded from being an active member of a non-political communal association, remains unanswered. Secretary desired Home Department's Secretary to arrange for a discussion, but it would appear that no discussion took place. The Home Department have since dropped their proposal to amend Rule 20 of the Secretary of State's Service Conduct Rules ~~so as~~ to prohibit active membership of communal organisations which claim to be of a non-political character. In view of HM's minute, with which the Home Department have not expressed any disagreement, and which is in conformity with the action of the Home Department in dropping their proposal to prohibit active membership of non-political communal organisations, paragraph 2 of the letter addressed to Mr Venkatchalam, Assistant Labour Welfare Officer, requiring him to withdraw from the Vice-Presidentship of the Andhra Provincial Scheduled Castes Welfare Association, requires to be expunged....

M.T. Raju,
20-3-1946.

... Among the cases which led to the examination of the question were those of Mr Venkatachalam and Mr Pushpa Raj both from the Labour Department....

2. In the present case, Mr Venkatachalam, Assistant Labour Welfare Officer, Madras, has been told after consulting the Home Department that he should withdraw from the Vice-Presidentship of the Andhra Scheduled Castes Welfare Association, as a Government servant cannot be permitted to be actively associated with a communal organisation, though he can remain a passive member of the association....

... In his minute of 19-7-44, HM (Labour) has however held that there are special reasons for the association of Government Servants belonging to the Scheduled Castes with their communal organisations and it is for consideration whether without making any general commitment we may agree to Mr Venkatachalam being allowed to resume the Vice-Presidentship of the Association, if he so desires.

3. The other case of Mr Pushpa Raj, Under Secretary, Labour Department, who was elected President of the Delhi Scheduled Castes Welfare Association will also be governed by the decision reached in the case of Mr Venkatachalam. It is not known whether like Mr Venkatachalam he has also since resigned from his office of President of the Association, though he was reported to be so inclined.

(?),
29-3-1946.
C.B.G.
2-4-1946.

In their letter of 14th June 1944, the Labour Department informed Mr Venkatachalam, Assistant Labour Welfare Officer Madras, that a Govt. Servant is not permitted to be an *active* Member of a communal organisation like the Andhra Provincial Scheduled Caste[s] Welfare Association. He was, therefore, asked to withdraw from the Vice-Presidentship of the Association and was informed that there was no objection to his remaining a passive member of the Association....

... When the file was submitted to Secretary (Sir Richard Tottenham) he was of the view that the whole rule needed amendment and simplification. It was impossible in his opinion to maintain satisfactory distinction between active and passive membership of an Association which takes part in politics. He suggested that what was required was a simple rule forbidding a Govt. servant from taking part in politics except their right of vote in elections and that so long as political parties were divided on communal lines the prohibition of this kind would automatically prevent Government servants from being members of communal organisations which combine political with other objects. Departments and Provincial Governments were consulted and they gave the proposal overwhelming support: please see the summary of 4 10-45. The Secretary of State did not, however, agree to the proposal for the amendment of Rule 20 of the Conduct Rules of his Services....

2. ... Active participation in the activities of a welfare association, the object of which is to promote general and non-political interest of a community, stands on a different footing and should not be prohibited.... This would be in accordance with the line taken in regard to Government servants being allowed to become members of the Anglo-Indian and Domiciled European Association, in paragraph 2 of Sir Reginald Maxwell's D.O. letter to Sir Henry Gidney No F50/23/36-Public dated 17th October 1936, Government servants belonging to the Scheduled Castes may be allowed to become members and office bearers of their Welfare Associations whose activities are non-political, subject to the proviso that they should discontinue their membership as soon as the association begins to engage itself in any activities which are likely to cause embarrassment to Government and that they should not publicly criticise the policy or the decisions of Government. It appears from the rules of the Delhi Scheduled Caste[s] Welfare Association and the Andhra Provincial Scheduled Caste[s] Welfare Association that the objects of those associations are mainly the moral and material advancement of those castes, and not political, if we interpret the expression 'political' narrowly....

B.D. Tewari,
30-4-1946.
Assistant Secretary.

It has I think been ruled, so far as European officers are concerned, that they may belong to the non-political section of the European Association, a section which was I think created for this very purpose. Are those papers handy and would not the principle cover this case?

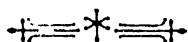
C.F.V. Williams,
Joint Secretary,
17-5-1946.

In paragraph 4 of our letter to the European Association No. 1491 dated the 31st May 1921, it was stated that the Govt. of India would have no objection to Government servants joining purely non-political branch of that association provided that that branch was separate non-political section of the association was in fact created is not known, but the difficulties in the way of creating such a separate branch were pointed out in paragraphs 4 and 5 of Mr Tonkinson's note dated 14 3-1921 in Public-A proceedings No. 202-205 June 1921. It was also pointed out in that note that the position of the European Association whose objects are mainly political was quite different from the Anglo-Indian Association[s] whose objects are mainly the social and material advancement of the Anglo-Indian community. The line to be taken with reference to the participation of member of the Scheduled Castes in the activities of welfare associations of those castes might, therefore, be on the lines adopted in respect of the membership of Government servants of the Anglo-Indian Associations *vide* our letter No. 648 dated the 26th May 1919 to Provincial Governments, and Sir Reginald Maxwell's letter No. 50/23/36-Public dated the 17th October 1936 to Sir Henry Gidney.

B.D. Tewari.
21-5-1946.

There is nothing in the Government Servants' Conduct Rules to prevent a Government servant from being a member of an organisation whose activities are confined to the social welfare of a particular community. The question whether the activities of a particular organisation is so confined is one of fact in each case. It is still of course incumbent upon a Government servant as a member of a social welfare organisation, to refrain from any activity likely to embarrass the Government and from publicly criticising the policy or decisions of the Government whether in the social welfare field or otherwise.

C.F.V. Williams,
Joint Secretary,
12-6-1946.



3. Can Government Servants be Members of Political Organisations?

Letter by Mahadev Prasad, a clerk with the Post and Telegraph Department, to Vallabhbhai Patel; Jaipur, 14 October 1946. An English translation of the Hindi original is included in the file, and reproduced below. File No. 47/34/46; Home (Establishments) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Vande Mataram

Jaipur
14-10-46.

Revered Sardarji,
Jai Hind.

Congratulations on the establishment of an interim national Government at the Centre. We heartily welcome your very first act in removing the restrictions on Government servants in the matter of dress. I am giving below what some of us feel on certain issues and hope you will kindly elucidate the position in regard to them:

(i) I and some of my colleagues in the Posts and Telegraph Department cannot take part in any political organisation in accordance with the Government orders. In view of those orders can we be members of the Indian National Congress or the Praja Mandal under the States People's Conference?

(ii) It is my and my colleagues' earnest desire that we should attend and take part in the forthcoming session of the Congress. Can we do so under the Govt. Servants' Conduct Rules?

You are requested to encourage us by elucidating the above points, and to put an end as soon as possible to the undesirable policy followed by the Government so far in this respect.

Madhav Prasad.

[Undated and unsigned reply to the above letter drafted by the Establishments Section, Home Department, Government of India.]

To: Mr Madhav Prasad,
Telegraph Clerk,
C/o Bhanamal & Co., Iron Merchants,
Chipolia Bazar, Jaipur.

Sir,

With reference to your letter dated 14-10-1946 addressed to the Hon'ble Home Member, I am directed to inform you that under the Government Servants' Conduct Rules, Government Servants are precluded from taking part in politics. They cannot therefore be members of the Indian National Congress or the Praja Mandals under the States People's Conference, nor can they attend/participate in sessions of the All India Congress.

I have etc.,
[?]
(AS (S).

Chapter 3. Labour and Peasants

1946 was a year characterized not only by communal riots and a displacement of direct anti-British upsurges by constitutional negotiations: it was a time also of remarkable, indeed unprecedented, labour unrest, and it saw the beginnings of several powerful peasant movements. The Mansergh volumes made no attempt to cover such dimensions. Our collection, in deliberate contrast, includes about 250 documents pertaining to labour and *kisan* affairs, extracted from central and provincial archives, newspaper reports, the files of the All India Trade Union Congress, and some private papers. Taken together, these illuminate certain alternative possibilities that have been almost forgotten today.

A. Labour Movements

Considerable thought had to be given to the most appropriate principle of arranging the documents here, for no format was without difficulties. Arrangement by industrial centres or regions, or according to specific sectors, would probably have been the most appropriate if our volume had been one on labour history alone. The format as suggested by the title of the *Towards Freedom* volumes, however, made a chronological arrangement more suitable, for this can convey at a glance the ups and downs of labour unrest across time on a subcontinental scale, and may perhaps stimulate some speculation about possible interconnections between labour history and other contemporary developments. The chronological arrangement was necessitated also by the rise during 1946 of several trade union agitations of countrywide range—a development both relatively new and of enormous significance—which would have been obscured under any other format.

A simple month-wise tally of the number of labour unrest documents itself appears quite revealing. January and February together have only five entries: labour in Bombay and Calcutta was then extremely active in broad anti-British protests, and agitations around demands specific to labour alone were not very prominent. The number of items goes up steeply from March, with the ration cut of that month, acquiesced in with little protest by the national leaders, as possibly a major aggravating factor. There are 23 entries for April, and the climax is attained in July, August, and September, with 36, 42 and 41 items respectively. But then came a steep decline, as communal riots increasingly disrupted labour unity in the big cities: December is represented by only four documents.

Two other striking features about the 1946 labour upsurge emerge from these documents. The range of participation is enormously varied and impressive, going much beyond the traditional textile base of early Indian trade unionism: it extends from sweepers through miners and railwaymen to white-collar employees in post offices, banks, and military establishments. Even policemen are affected, and that across several provinces. The second, related feature is of course the rise of countrywide organizations and movements—repeated threats of railway strikes, causing real panic in official quarters, and realized in the South Indian Railway between July and September under Communist leadership; the very effective postal strike of July–August; police agitations in Delhi, the United Provinces, Bihar, Bengal and Madras; strikes of Imperial Bank employees and military establishment clerks.

Strikes were at times bitter, prolonged, even bloody affairs, like the South Indian Railway strike at Golden Rock [Tiruchirapally], and the Amalner textile strike in Bombay province in September–October which was brutally repressed. There were massive solidarity actions, most notably the general strike in support of postmen in Calcutta on 29 July, which has attained almost legendary status in the radical memory of Bengal due to its naturally being counterposed to the events of 16 August. Communal riots could not immediately and totally destroy labour unity. We have 43 items still for September, 18 for November, and in early 1947 powerful strikes of tramwaymen and dock workers were still taking place in Calcutta. Unity in action around specific economic demands remained possible, and in that sense the labour movement, along with the kisan movements, represented a logical counterpoint to the rising tide of Muslim and Hindu communalism.

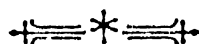
The documents richly illustrate – with official reports, almost obsessively so – the central role of Communists in the labour movements in 1946. Equally evident is the near hostility, often, of the Congress and of League leadership, particularly where they had become governing parties. Already by April, a Congress ministry was repressing a sweepers' strike in Bombay, and Congress volunteers were officiating as policemen during a police strike in Patna. Such tendencies could have wider implications, too. On 9 August, shortly before the formation of the Interim Government, the British Director of the Intelligence Bureau speculated: "... the labour situation is becoming increasingly dangerous.... Until a responsible Indian government is introduced at the centre, there is little that can be done.... I am satisfied that a responsible government, if one can be achieved, will deal more decisively with Labour than is at present possible."¹ Things had certainly changed a lot since 9 August 1942.

B. Peasant Movements

The documents relating to peasant movements have a somewhat distinct time frame and characters, and have made advisable a different principle of arrangement. Virtually all the 38 items come from the second half of the year, and quantitatively they are far less than the documentation on labour. It needs to be added, of course, that in part this could be a function of inadequate reporting, and the predominantly peasant movements will be more prominent in Part B of our volume dealing with princely states. Kisan agitations, not unexpectedly, had a local, or at most, a regional character: an arrangement by provinces, therefore, seemed preferable.

Apart from some rather scattered items from the Punjab, the United Provinces, and Bihar, the bulk of the documents refer to the Tanjore, Ramnad and Malabar regions of Madras, the agitation of the Warli tribals in Bombay, and the beginnings of the Tebhaga movement in Bengal of sharecroppers demanding two-thirds share of the crop, instead of one-half, from rich farmers. In a pattern which has had many parallels in post-Independence India, the more militant of peasant movements tended to be of tribals, landless labourers, or sharecroppers, even though anti-landlord slogans and organisation of tenants remained in 1946, and for quite some time afterwards, the main staple of official activity and ideology of the Kisan Sabhas. Communist predominance in all these movements was even clearer than in the case of labour, and once again Left-led agitations emerge as a potential, never fully realized, and yet a memorable and moving alternative to communal violence. Tebhaga, it needs to be recalled, arose *after* the Calcutta and Noakhali riots, though admittedly not in identical areas. Official and newspaper documentation on Tebhaga has been supplemented by a less conventional source: a diary in Bengali by Somnath Hore, a well-known artist, then active in the Communist Party. The diary has been recently translated into English (*Tebhaga: An Artist's Diary and Sketchbook*, Calcutta, 1990), and provides vignettes of the atmosphere of Tebhaga in the North Bengal countryside with a directness that no official or Communist Party report can quite convey. [Ed.]

¹ Note by N.P.A. Smith, Director of Intelligence; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India



3.A LABOUR

3.A.i January

1. Police Assault Strikers of Bombay Oil Companies

Extracts from a news report, 'Oil company strikers let into a trap'. *Free Press Journal*, 7 January 1946.

"Workers of the Burma Shell, Standard Vacuum and Caltex who are on strike are fighting for what they believe to be their rights. They are prepared to submit their demands to the scrutiny of a Tribunal in whom the public has confidence. That is the only way to stop the strike, and the oil workers feel that they have a right to claim the sympathy and support of other workers of the city as well as the general public in a just cause," Say Mr H.R. Pardiwala, President of the National Oil Workers' Union, and Mr Abidali Jafferbhoy, President of Burma Shell Oil Workers' Union, in a joint statement.

"After trying all methods of negotiation and persuasion for a bonus equal to a month's wages from the stupendous profits made by the companies, during the war, the workers resorted to a strike, the only effective weapon which is available to the helpless labourer," continues the statement....

"Yesterday morning, after completely making all preparations for aggression and attack the workers who were peacefully picketing their respective installations, were called to the open space near the Burma Shell installation gate, on the pretext that the managers of all the three companies would be coming there to speak to them, with a view to arrive at some settlement.

The innocent, illiterate workers were, in the absence of their leaders, led into their trap. The workers thereupon collected there and sat down in a peaceful and orderly manner, expecting the managers to come at any time. After some time, instead of the managers came a large posse of police, who without giving any warning or intimation to the peaceful workers, used tear gas and lathis. About 30 workers were arrested, to be prosecuted, of course, for having committed various illegal acts, which necessitated the exercise of 'reasonable force' on the part of the police.

Up to 3 pm about 220 casualties of 'law and order' were treated at the KEM Hospital....

2. Communist-led Strike Wave in Calcutta: Congress and League Attitudes

Extracts from an article, 'Calcutta's worker-humanity in action'. *People's Age*, 13 January 1946.

Calcutta is in the throes of one of the biggest strike waves in its history. And it is not merely the organised and advanced sections like the Tramway workers that are on the move. Even those sections regarded till now as the most backward, like the rickshaw-pullers, are stirring.

For sixteen days, from November 28th to December 14th, Calcutta's 30,000 rickshaw-pullers were on complete strike. While rickshaw earnings have gone down to less than Rs 2, with the decrease of military and increase of civilian petrol buses, their owners' charges are more or less on the old rate of Re 1.8 [one rupee eight annas] per shift. Besides, the owners in

connivance with the police have had any number of licences issued so that there are always surplus pullers to cut down the rates. It is also alleged that the police are taking bribes openly.

Rickshaw Workers' Struggle

Against this state of affairs came this big strike, but what is remarkable this time is the perfect discipline of the strikers and their unflinching determination. While usually strike rallies begin with a bang and then sag, the rickshaw-pullers held daily rallies at Wellington Square where on the first day came 8000, then 5000 and then 15,000.

Remarkable also was the way they helped each other till the last and the volunteer force they raised. Pullers' own men like Pasman, Bachangoala, Rameswar Budhanmeah, Mohammed Hanif, not only led the strike, but spoke with fire at the meetings. Pasman said: "For 30 years I have pulled rickshaws and never have I been reduced to such straits, but the hartal must go on."

It was a strike led by pullers themselves.

There was no end to provocation by the owners and the police. Old rickshaws were burnt by the bosses themselves to throw the blame on the pullers. Strike leaders were beaten and processions interfered with but the pullers remained disciplined under their Red Flag. At last on the 14th, the bosses agreed to a settlement at the new rate of fourteen annas for the old and Re 1 for new rickshaws.

And who are the bosses? B.M. Sen, one of the most notorious among them, has now joined the Congress, while Pardesi, another of them, poses as a great Congressman. Their agents once had tried to raid the Union Office with Gandhi caps and with cries of 'Jai Hind'. Similarly another notorious owner is Jabbar, who is ex-League Minister, H.S. Suhrawardy's man.

Strike Wave

This new awakening is not confined to the ranks of the rickshaw-pullers alone. Today more than 25,000 workers of various industries are on strike under the Red Flag. Some, like the workers of Lever Brothers and Roy Hudson, have been continuing their fight for nearly three months and with unbelievable morale.

The most remarkable is the strike of 8000 workers in Birla's Kesoram Textile Mill at Metiabruz. Starting on November 28, it has been going on for over a month now. From the first, the Police were called in and the most astounding thing is that the Thana Officer made his office inside the mill where the arrested workers were taken and assaulted! The Police accompany the gate-babu of the mill and pick up the workers specially pointed out by him. Workers from the line are asked to clear out at night, while others are beaten and prosecuted.

But I was struck by the wonderful determination of the workers. Old Jehangir working since 1914, told me: "I am working here for over 30 years and I have seen big strikes, but never one like this, when all sections and departments, and women and old mothers have joined and even boiler-workers have stopped work. Our strike meetings were never so crowded as this time."

Yakub who has been working for 39 years said: "In previous strikes, we always used to have fights and squabbles among ourselves but this time there is perfect peace and nobody thinks of going back to work."

Old women who usually feel bad in a long strike surprised me most. "If men try to break the strike, we shall chase them with broomsticks."

In Bustees absolute discipline is kept despite attempts at assaults by dalals and efforts to provoke communal trouble by exploiting the fact that both Hindu and Muslim workers live side by side.

It is interesting to note that Birla's Kesoram Mill made roaring business out of war contracts and held a reception with the decoration of the 'V' sign all over the mill in honour of Governor Casey's visit.

Role of Hindustan Mazdoor Sevak Sangh

Birla's object in holding out is to crush the Red Flag and establish the Hindustan Mazdoor Sevak Sangh at Metiabruz, Dr Suresh Banerji of the Sangh tried his hand here, but his men became less and less conspicuous as the strike went on. Though not daring to condemn the strike, he and his agents say that this strike is not likely to be victorious. His agents try to demoralise the workers by spreading rumours that about 4000 blacklegs are to be brought in.

It is interesting to note that Bijoy Bahadur, the 'bara Babu' of the mill, and others of the Mill Management attended a reception in honour of Suresh Babu sometime ago. During the strike, Hindustan Mazdoor Sevak Sanghwallas were nowhere to be seen. Shafatullah Khan, another of Suhrawardy's agents, also was trying to demoralise the workers by saying that first it is derogatory for Muslim workers to beg and live on charity; secondly, it is only a Congress-Communist quarrel (!) and Muslims must not participate; and thirdly, that it is an illegal strike!

Congress Working Committee Leaders Keep Mum

The strikers sent a memorandum to Gandhiji, Maulana Azad, Pandit Nehru, Sardar Patel, the President of the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee and others, appealing to them to intervene. But while Sardar Patel was Birla's guest, and Panditji could even go to the Stock Exchange to receive the encomiums of share-brokers, none of them had time even to acknowledge the workers' appeal....

Bengal Potteries is another Swadeshi establishment whose directors are Nalini Ranjan Sarkar, Maharaja Srish Nandi of Cossimbazar, M.G. Bhakat and others. Last year they made a profit of over 12 lakhs and the shareholders' dividend was 30 per cent, while 3000 workers have among them been earning as low as 6 [6 annas] daily. Bosses' zoolum was a common feature. The workers after first protesting, gave strike notice.

Since then, workshop-lorries have put up the Tri-colour Flag and on 10th December, Suresh Bannerji held a meeting almost under the open patronage of the Management with Shop Durwans working as volunteers. The Company's lorry fitted with a microphone took the clerks to the meting. Workers boycotted the meeting, where, instead of the bosses, the Communist Party and the Red Flag were attacked by the speakers.

This strike started peacefully on the 14th. Next day, some babus defying the pickets entered shouting 'Jai Hind'. On the 19th they entered with a Police guard. Meanwhile the strikers kept peaceful and [were] disciplined. But soon after, one of the directors was seen in discussion with the Police Commissioner. Lorry loads of Gurkhas, Sergeants and a tear-gas squad paraded the whole area. On the 21st, one babu entered the gate trampling over women worker-pickets, injuring three of them.

The owners tried to import black-legs. But they fled. They then brought some Punjabi workers and spread the rumour in some Punjabi hotels that they had been beaten by strikers. When two sardars came to enquire, they ended up by greeting the strikers! Provocation was given by the babus by shouting "Communist Party Murdabad". But the workers kept perfect

discipline and with them were 600 women. When old Rukhai was taken to the hospital after an injury, she said, "Allah Rasool Lal Jhanda Lal Ho"....

Spreading Communal Disruption

... In the Cessipore Gun and Shell factory, a strike began from the 14th in the Stores Section. Next day, Deben Sen, a Congress-labour leader, came with the Tri-colour to spread anti-Red Flag feeling. On the 17th, Suresh Banerji and Deben Sen held a meeting attacking the Communist Party. The result was great excitement among the Muslim workers who were anxious to bring the League Flag and beat the Congress flaggers. It is the Communists who are appealing to them to be peaceful and not play into the hands of communal disrupters.

Similarly, among Electric [power supply] workers as soon as Congressmen went with the Tri-colour attacking the Red Flag, the Muslim workers were anxious to fight back with the League Flag. The result was that the masses of the workers were disgusted and reacted by not attending the meetings of either side. In such circumstances, it is the bosses who reap the harvest and all workers who suffer in common.

Thus at the time when the Congress Working Committee was meeting, Calcutta's thousands of workers were passing through a great upheaval. While the Congress labour leaders fought the Red Flag and tried to pit the Tri-colour against it, thus only confusing and weakening the workers' ranks, the top leaders of the Working-Committee did not care even to address the workers in meetings. But it is understood that the strike in Birla's Kesoram Mill put the Congress leaders in acute embarrassment: they were afraid that in any workers' meeting, the Kesoram strikers might appear and ask awkward questions about the Working Committee leaders' patronage of Birla.

3. Ambedkarites Keep Aloof from Nagpur Textile Strikes

Extracts from a news report, 'General strike of CP textile workers'. *Free Press Journal*, 17 January 1946.

Nagpur, January 16. A general strike by textile workers of Nagpur commenced this morning here on Wednesday.

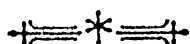
The workers of the Model Mills went in as usual but refused to work. The Management of the mill after half an hour's efforts to persuade the workers to commence work switched off the main power station. Thereupon the strikers withdrew from the mill premises. The strikers of the Model Mills who numbered 2600 remained peaceful.

In the Empress Mills Group "A" section, workers from the Scheduled Castes Federation (known as Ambedkarites) are continuing work in one of the five mills.

A large section of the workers, however, of this mill kept away. Of the five mills belonging to the Empress group of mills, only one mill is working with partial complements.

Strong police arrangements have been made in the mill localities. Nearly 85 per cent of textile workers joined the strike this morning in response to the call of the Central Provinces Textile Workers' Federation.

The principal demands of the strikers are, increase in basic wages, dearness allowance, a 48-hour week and institution of provident fund for workers....

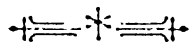


4. All India Trade Union Congress and the Cabinet Mission

Enclosed in the file is a newspaper clipping, 'Cabinet Mission's scheme', *Statesman*, 27 January 1946. File No. 9; All India Trade Union Congress Papers (1946); Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

Interviewed by the Associated Press of India on his reaction to the Cabinet Mission's scheme S. J. Mrinal Kanti Bose, President, All India Trade Union Congress has issued the following statement.

The Cabinet Mission's proposals represent an honest effort to reconcile demands that are incompatible. Yet they seek to achieve an object which is common to all Indian parties. In the light of this objective I think all Indian parties should welcome the scheme and come together to work it. If they do, it is very likely that association will bear fruitful results which long distance cannonading has so far failed to achieve and can never achieve. I believe I reflect the views of the workers and peasants when I say that it is their desire that the Congress and the League should participate in the Interim Government and work in it for some time that will go a great way in tranquilising the situation which is explosive at the present moment. While expressing this hope and recognising the worth of the great work the Cabinet Mission has done and has been doing I cannot refrain from observing that the Mission has allowed the whole canvass to be filled by a picture of communal strife as if this strife is the order of the day and the spirit of it has infected all classes of people. This is partly a misconception and largely an exaggeration. The broad mass of the people representing the workers and peasants want to live in peace and if left alone by communal propagandists, would be united in fighting for their bread and freedom which interest them more than dissensions in the name of religion. They have been unable to express constitutionally what they feel, owing to the extremely limited franchise but the labour strikes (which have received scant attention from authorities) and the deep discontent of which these strikes are a manifestation, are an indication of what they really desire. They are politically conscious enough to realise that India must have complete independence before they can hope to achieve their own objective which is to bring about a complete change in the present order of society based on the economy of scarcity. They expect therefore that the Congress and the League should put their shoulder to the wheel and get for our countrymen the control of the machinery of the Government. If the political parties lose sight of this main objective in the squabbles over things of comparatively minor importance the initiative will pass out of their hands and the revolutionary forces that are moving the masses of the people will sweep them away and the transition to freedom may not be peaceful at all. The Cabinet Mission apprehends bloodshed and civil war if the political parties fail to come to an agreement. We also fear bloodshed but not communal civil war so much as class war.



3.A.ii February

1. Trouble at Golden Rock, Tiruchirapally

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Madras Province for the first half of February 1946. Public (General) Department, Government of Madras (1946); Tamil Nadu State Archives.

Labour

The District Magistrate, Trichinopoly, reports that trouble appears to be developing at the South Indian Railway Workshops at Golden Rock, where some 5000 labourers are employed. These workers are agitating for a general increase in wages and for an incremental scale of pay to replace the existing graded scales of pay. The Union has now instructed the men to adopt a 'go-slow' policy; and the management finds that the daily outturn has become alarmingly low. The General Manager met the representatives of the Union and promised to give a few minor concessions which were within his power such as liberalising the system of promotion within the graded system. He informed them that it was not within his power to meet their general demands which were for the Railway Board to consider. The Union are however persisting in their 'go-slow' policy. The General Manager has now given notice of discharge to some of the leaders of the labourers, but it is quite likely that there may be a strike or lock out. It is hoped that the strike, if it takes place, will not spread to the operational section of the Railway. The situation is being carefully watched. The more important of the usual railway union meetings were two meetings of the South Indian Railway Labour Union in South Arcot District where speeches were made to the effect that there would be a general strike if any retrenchment should take place.

3.A.iii March

1. Government Employees Not to Stand in for Striking Postal Workers

Representation received by the Secretary, Home Department, Government of India, from the Secretary, All India Federation of Ministerial Services Association; Nagpur, 4 March 1946. File No. 48/16; Home (Establishments) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

*Nagpur,
4th March 1946.*

Sir,

I am directed to approach you on a most delicate problem which confronts us today and for the solution of which we look to the Government for guidance.

2. A rumour is persistent that in the event of the Posts and Telegraph Men's proposed strike materialising, the Government of India has requisitioned Provincial Governments to give the loan of their own employees to work in vacant places of strikers. We are confident that Government will not commit such a moral wrong which will set one group of Government employees against another and lead to their eventual demoralisation. But in case our calculations

come to be untrue, we would most humbly and respectfully but equally strongly raise our voice against such a step.

3. Our people have always cooperated with the Government and patiently worked under the conditions in which Government has been pleased to keep them. Coming as they do from a respectable and intelligent stock of people, they have been serving the Government honestly and loyally but without sacrificing their self respect and conscience so far. If they are now asked to work in places of strikers, their feelings are sure to be hurt as they would be looked down as blacklegs. The Federation would therefore make an earnest request to Government that they will be kind enough not to take to this course if at all it be in the offing but try to redress if possible the reasonable grievances of those who have this day been obliged to launch on the extreme step.

Your most obedient servant,
M.S. Manian.

2. Bombay Primary School Teachers' Strike

News report, '1000 teachers in city and suburbs go on strike'. *Free Press Journal*, 5 March 1946.

Poona, March 4. For the first time in the educational history of Bombay Province, about 1000 primary teachers in the city and suburbs struck work today to enforce their demands for revision of salaries, dearness allowance, etc. The Headmasters of primary schools have intimated local school authorities about their decision and asked them to take over the school property.

The strike is complete and peaceful. Teachers in the men's and women's training colleges have also joined. A police bandobust is being maintained as a precautionary measure.

Owing to today's strike, about 25,000 schoolboys will remain in their homes.

3. Nagpur Workers Protest Against Cut in Food Rations

Memorandum by the District Magistrate, Nagpur, to the Commissioner, Nagpur Division; Nagpur, 14 March 1946. File No. 12; Political and Military Department, Government of the Central Provinces & Bihar (1946); Madhya Pradesh State Archives.

Nagpur,
14th March 1946.

As a protest against the cut in rations, we received information, that a procession would be taken out on the 12th March 1946 and demonstrations made. Arrangements were made to guard against a breach of the public peace.

2. At 3 o'clock the labourers of both mills stopped working. Labourers of the Scheduled Castes Federation decided not to join the procession. Many other labourers also did not join it. There were in all about 600 processionists. Altogether the show was very tame. The procession ended in the Chitnavis Park. It is peaceful. A meeting was then held. This too was a very tame show as not more than 1000 had attended. It may be noted that Ruikar was not present at the meeting.

3. As none of the night-shift workers could attend, another meeting was held on the 13th at 2.15 AM under the auspices of the Nagpur Textile Workers' Union. R.S. Ruikar had returned from Bombay and he attended the meeting. About 1200 persons attended it. The report of the

Magistrate and that of the Police Officer who attended this meeting are enclosed. Mr R.S. Ruikar made a very objectionable speech and all that he said does bring him within the mischief of the law. He demanded of Government the withdrawal of the cut in the rations and threatened that the workers would go on strike and even declare war against Government unless the cut in the rations was withdrawn. He gave notice to Government for withdrawal of the cut in the rations within a week. He advised the audience to come under the Red Flag and said that they would march to Government house and surround it and stop the Governor from going out and also that he will march to the Secretariat to stop work there. He also said that there will be great disturbance and bloodshed. I had been out in the city this morning trying to find out how far his speech was effective. I am definite that it has had hardly any effect on the audience. He is aware that Government is not likely to interfere because of the impending elections and he is taking advantage of the position. In his speech he has incited people to resort to violence. This Mr Ruikar made very objectionable speeches before he left for Bombay. The speech he gave on the 13th morning is also very objectionable. I personally think that he may be severely warned against making such objectionable speeches in future. If he still persists in making objectionable speeches after the warning is communicated, his prosecution will be considered.

S. Sanyal.
District Magistrate,
Nagpur.

4. Discontent within Lower Police Ranks in Madras Province

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Madras Province for the first half of March 1946. Public (General) Department, Government of Madras (1946); Tamil Nadu State Archives.

Miscellaneous

Signs of discontent continue to be reported among the lower police ranks both over alleged low scales of pay and over the cut in rations. From one or two districts resignations have been reported and in Madura it is reported that a bid is being made, mainly by the Communist Party to undermine police morale by suggesting that the police should follow the example of the RIN strikers. In Malabar there is reported to be some unrest among the Malabar Special Police over their messing arrangements and some of the men are said to have sent a secret communication to the editor of the *Mathrubhumi* to the effect that they are really good "patriots", and asking him to take up their case.

5. Communists Behind Labour Unrest in Madras Province

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Madras Province for the first half of March 1946. File No. 18/3/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Labour

Labour still continues to show signs of unrest mainly under Communist influence. As one Collector reports, employers are definitely nervous in dealing with their employees, for the tendency now is to strike on the slightest provocation. In Madras, at a conference of the

Automobile Workers' Union, P. Jeevanandam, a prominent Communist Leader warned to Government to take note of this prevailing discontent, especially over retrenchment and inadequate wages, as otherwise there would be a general strike. At another meeting of the Workers' Union of Spencer & Co, Madras, a similar threat of strike was made. In Modukkarai, Coimbatore District, the workers in the Cement Factory, who are under Communist control have decided to go on strike unless certain "grievances" are redressed. In North Arcot, again the Communists organised a strike on 27th February 1946 among some 900 labourers of the Cotton and Silk Mills at Gudiyattam. The strike continues. In Madras City about 1700 workers employed in the Ordinance Clothing Factory went on strike on the morning of 11th March 1946 on the question of a victory bonus and enhancement of dearness allowance. Here too the strike was instigated by the Communists, but immediately after, members of the Congress Labour Sub-Committee contacted the strikers and practically "stole the show". The strike was called off on 13th March 1946 on the advice of the Congress Labour Sub-Committee. In Salem there is reported to be unrest among the Mettur Mill labourers and the strike in the Mettur Indian Metal and Metallurgical Works continues, since the management have refused to reinstate certain workers who were dismissed.

Communists have not hesitated to exploit the cut in rations, and in Vizagapatam there was a strike on 7th March 1946 at the Chittivalsa mills mainly over this question. The strike was called off the next day but on 12th March 1946 when the distribution of rations took place at the mills, a good many of the workers refused to accept the reduced rations.

The news that the Posts and Telegraph strike has been called off, has been welcomed with relief in all circles.

6. Delhi Policemen on Strike

News report, 'Delhi police strike'. *Hindustan Times*, 22 March 1946.

More than 2000 policemen in Delhi refused to take their food on Thursday morning as a protests against their low salaries and the bad quality of food supplied to them from the Police Lines kitchen.

The situation took such a serious turn in the afternoon that British troops were called out to the Police Lines. The soldiers were put on guard duty in place of Indian policemen on the armoury in the Police Lines.

The policemen in the Police Lines were the first to refuse food. As the news spread to the various police stations, the men there also refused to take food. The constables on duty in Tis Hazari Maidan also refused to take food from the police van.

One of the strikers said: "The food supplied to us from the Police Lines kitchen is not fit for human consumption. Even cattle would not eat the *chappatis* and *dal* which we have to eat."

The main demands of the strikers are: Raising of their salary to Rs 80 per month, grant of housing allowance of Rs 10 per month, daily allowance of Rs 3 when posted on outstation duty and full pay during sickness.

Delhi policemen are at present paid Rs 22 as salary and Rs 22 as allowance per month.

Firm Action Contemplated

Following a conference of local officials in the Police Lines, it was decided to put down the disaffection in the police force with a firm hand. Mr Robinson, Senior Superintendent of Police, has been given full freedom to deal with the situation as a purely departmental affair.

No Refusal to Work

When the policemen refused food on Thursday morning, they made it clear that they would not refuse to do their duty. Later however, the situation worsened owing to the failure of the authorities to deal with the situation tactfully and satisfy the men. The men concerned are the backbone of the Police force in Delhi and, besides other work, have to do duty in the Viceroy's House also. They bring undertrial prisoners from the jail to the courts, do guard duties and help in the investigation of cases.

Mrs Asaf Ali's Congratulations

A pointed reference to the hunger-strike was made by Mrs Aruna Asaf Ali, while addressing a huge public meeting held in Chuna Mandi on Thursday night under the presidentship of Mr Damodar Saroop, MLA (Central).

Mrs Asaf Ali said she was glad that they were standing up for their rights as civilised human beings. She assured them of her full support in the fight for their legitimate rights. She strongly criticised the "irresponsible bureaucracy" in the centrally-administered Delhi Province. She wanted that the head of the local administration in the Delhi Province should be a non-official Indian. She also demanded the restoration of civil liberties in Delhi the effective functioning of volunteer organisations and the cancellation of orders under the Defence of India Rules banning processions.

The constables who are on hunger strike are contemplating taking out a procession on Friday. It is understood that the situation created by the hunger strike of the Police constables in Delhi may be raised in the Central Assembly on Friday.

Official Version

A Press communique issued by the Deputy Commissioner says: "A small number of men, mostly recruits of the Delhi Police Lines, today refused duty alleging certain grievances. The Additional Superintendent of Police was immediately deputed to inquire and the men were personally asked by the Senior Superintendent of Police that they must resume duty and above all they must comply with orders. At 3 p.m. after resuming duty, while the inquiry was being conducted, certain of the men urged the recruits who were on duty to forsake it.

"In view of the possible developments, the military was asked to stand by near the Police Lines and 12 men who were taking a leading part in the dereliction of duty were told that their grievances would be inquired into either in Cantonments or in the Civil Lines Police Station, owing to the difficulty of making such an inquiry in the Lines. After professing their willingness to proceed to Cantonments, the men again refused to obey orders and to leave the lines. After every effort had been made to persuade them to have their grievances looked into in either of the places appointed, they still refused to obey orders. The 12 men have, therefore, been dismissed."

7. British Troops Arrest Striking Policemen of Delhi

Extracts from a news report, 'Tear gas attack on Delhi policemen'. *Statesman*, 23 March 1946.

The strike of policemen in Delhi which continued yesterday led to an incident in Daryaganj when tear gas was used against a procession of about 100 strikers.

British troops, whose assistance had been sought helped to cordon off the processionists near Faiz Bazar police station and 86 arrests were made. There were no casualties. Later in the day seven more strikers were arrested, bringing the total to 93.

The latest reports say that the situation in the various police stations is quiet, but military pickets are still stationed in the Police Lines, the Kotwali, Sabzimandi and some other places. The ordinary business life of the city was unaffected, and trading and traffic went on as usual.

The striker's procession, half of whom were in uniform and the rest in civilian clothes, marched through the city's main streets yesterday morning shouting "Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs are all brethren" and "Jai Hind". They stopped near the Clock Tower in the Chowk and backed on to constables on duty outside the Town Hall to join them. When the latter did not respond the processionists scaled the railing and tried further to persuade their colleagues who, however, still refused to accompany them. The procession demonstrated outside the Central Police Station and moved toward Daryaganj. Here 86 arrests were made with the help of armed British troops.

A few strikers who attempted to escape the military cordon were attacked with tear-gas by other Indian civil police who had remained on duty, four tear-gas shots being fired. Within a few minutes the strikers had all surrendered and were forthwith sent to the Delhi District Jail where they were remanded to judicial custody.

Official Version

A communique issued by the Deputy Commissioner, Delhi, stated: "This morning the recruits in the Police Lines went normally on duty but were persuaded by two constables subsequently to break duty for which offence the latter were arrested, whereupon some hundred constables broke from the lines and went through the City. On the way they assaulted a traffic constable who refused to join them. At Faiz Bazar Police Station, where they were, with hardly any success, endeavouring to get others to join them, they were cordoned off by the military whose assistance has been requisitioned. Eighty-six men were arrested by their officers and dispatched forthwith to jail where they have been remanded to judicial custody by a magistrate. Four gas shots were fired to facilitate the arrest of three men who were attempting to escape over roofs. Life in the city continues normally.

"Reports appearing in the Press of extensive hunger strike by policemen are grossly exaggerated. All but about 15 per cent of the police force of 3000 took their food this morning."

A later communique said: "Arrests of policemen hitherto made number 93 of whom 58 are recruits. At the roll call held this afternoon in the Police Lines 85—all recruits—were found to be absent. Elsewhere the police is functioning normally and more than double the number of men in the Police Lines have fed this afternoon as compared to this morning. The city remains entirely quiet. A senior police officer and a magistrate have been deputed by the Chief Commissioner to look into alleged police grievances and have begun work."

Earlier Press agency reports to the effect that 2000 of the Delhi Provincial police had joined the hunger strike were proved to be exaggerated and in fact, not more than 450 of the 3000 police in the province refused their food from the police kitchen yesterday morning.



8. Bombay Primary Schoolteachers Demand Living Wage

Extracts from a news report, 'Bombay teachers fight against starvation'. *Free Press Journal*, 28 March 1946.

Bombay, Wednesday. The strike of 40,000 primary teachers throughout the Bombay Province which commenced on March 1 as a sequel to the failure of the Government and Local Authorities to pay them what they termed a living wage, has been taken so light-heartedly, both by the authorities and the parents of children, who have perforce been compelled to stay at home, that 300 of their representatives staged a huge black flag demonstration on the sands of Chowpatty at noon today.

It was decided at Chowpatty to take out a procession direct to the Secretariat to impress upon the authorities the urgency and genuineness of their grievances. The procession, which included a number of women teachers, led by Mr B.D. Chitale of Maharashtra and Mr Syed Noor of Gujarat, marched towards the Fort. Every one of the processionists carried a black flag and shouted slogans drawing the attention of the public to their plight and their semi-starved condition....

9. Striking Policemen of Bihar Form Union Under Congress Socialist Party

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Bihar for the second half of March 1946. File No. 18/3/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Law and Order

In the last report discontent among the police force over food and cloth was reported. Some trouble was expected as a result of the cut in rations and it was decided by Government that members of the police force should receive a heavy worker's ration of 8 'chataks' (about 1 lb) of cereals daily of which 6 chataks (approximately 12 ounces) should be rice. Towards the end of March information was received that there was likely to be a strike of constables on the 3rd April, the day after the new Ministry were expected to take office. In Muzaffarpur district constables refused duty except for guards on treasuries and armouries on the 31st March and on the 1st April the Ministers designate issued a joint statement through the medium of the Press promising to look into grievances. At the time of writing this report the police force in Muzaffarpur have returned to work, as have also those in Patna, Saran, Champaran, Darbhanga, Monghyr, Purnea and Purulia, who went on strike, but those in Bhagalpur and Saharsa districts are still on strike. There was a temporary strike in Ranchi district, but it has now been called off. The Hon'ble Prime Minister received a deputation of constables on the afternoon of the 4th April and they resumed duty that evening. Those in other districts who were still on strike followed suit and it is expected that those in Bhagalpur and Saharsa will do the same. Instructions had been issued by the Inspector General of Police to the effect that Superintendents of Police should explain to their police that a strike is a serious breach of discipline and that, while there will be no victimisation of persons who went on strike prior to this warning, those who remained on strike after warning would be suspended and are also liable to prosecution under the Indian Police Act and the Essential Services Ordinance. The intention is only to pick out ring leaders for prosecution and to let off those who have been led astray with minor punishments. Steps

were taken in consultation with the local Military Commander for the drafting of troops into districts which were likely to be disturbed. Economic factors have admittedly contributed towards the constables' discontent....

As ex-constable named Ramanand Tewari, who was dismissed from the police as a result of his activities in the Jamshedpur police strike in 1942, has been playing a large part in this agitation, but the indications are that he has exercised a moderating influence in that he has tried to persuade the constables to make their demands as reasonable as possible and to postpone their strike until the Ministers have had a chance of considering their grievances. A very objectionable printed leaflet in Hindi has been found in circulation over the greater part of the province. Ramanand Tewari is said to have joined up with the Congress Socialist Party and has been making efforts to form a Police Constables' Union. One of their demands is that their Union (or Sangh) should be recognised. Although no regular grievances have been laid before their superior officers, it is understood that their main demands include:

- (1) increase of pay to Rs 100;
- (2) free quarters or allowance in lieu;
- (3) free education for children;
- (4) greater courtesy from their superior officers;
- (5) no departmental action after acquittal;
- (6) grant of railway warrants while going on or returning from all leave;
- (7) increase in halting allowance; and
- (8) increase in leave.

Whatever may be the immediate outcome of the preparations for this strike, its long term effects are bound to be serious. A very serious blow has been struck against the discipline of police force.

The contagion of indiscipline has also spread to the Bhagalpur Jail staff who want more cloth, more food and more pay.

10. Ration Cuts Lead to Labour Unrest in Calcutta and Dhaka

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Bengal for the second half of March 1946. File No. 18/3/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Labour

The fortnight under review is noteworthy for an increase in propaganda among labourers on account of the elections and clashes between violent elements and the large number of strikes in the Hooghly, Howrah and Barrackpore industrial areas which were staged as a protest against the cut in the ration. From the 19th onwards strikes on this issue were frequent and more than 70,000 workers were still out in a dozen mills at the end of the month. There are definite signs that the worker's leaders are now turning away from the cut in ration issue and concentrating their attention on a demand for increased dearness allowance, the figure mentioned being Rs 42 per month.

A strike has been going on in 4 cotton mills near Dacca for nearly a month. The police had to open fire on the strikers of one of the mills when they obstructed officers of the mill who

were trying to take out some papers for the general meeting of the shareholders. Some deaths were caused.

It is reported that the Communists Party of India is trying to organise a general strike all over India during the coming railway strike and that letters have been issued from their central organisation to labour leaders of other parties to help them in the matter.

11. Ration Cuts Cause Unrest Among UP Government Employees and Police

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for the United Provinces for the second half of March 1946. File No. 18/3/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Industrial

Although uneasiness over the food situation continued, workers on the whole were quiet during the fortnight—their leaders being engaged in electioneering. Strikes, however, took place in the Government of India Forms Press at Aligarh and the Chheoki Ordnance Depot at Allahabad. The reduction in the ration led to 'hunger-strikers' among the armed police which are described in paragraph 5; and in a number of districts patwaris who are engaged in making preparations for grain procurement have gone on strike, but full reports have not yet been received.

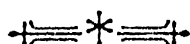
Agitation among municipal sweepers in the Jhansi division is spreading through the efforts of a Communist mischief-maker and in spite of the agreement of the Municipal Boards to raise their pay by Rs 8 against the demand of Rs 14 the sweepers are in no mood to compromise on their demand for a total pay of Rs 29 for part-time work. Municipal sweepers in Benares were also on strike from March 12 to 16.

In Lucknow tonga drivers and rickshaw men were on strike for a day to press for ration shops for transport animals.

Law and Order

... The decrease in the ration from 12 to 8 chhataks led to Police hunger-strikes in six districts. The strikes took the form of token protests and in some places were accompanied by demands for increase of pay and for other amenities and were confined to the messes of the armed police, and the military police. While there was no actual disobedience to orders and the men did their duties, this indication of a slackening of discipline is disquieting. Even more disquieting perhaps are the facts that in Benares and Lucknow posters appeared during the night stating that men who ate the reduced ration would be deemed, in Hindus, to have eaten beef and, if Muslim, to have eaten pork; that postcards containing incitement to strike are being received in Cawnpore; and that as a result of information received in the Meerut district it was discovered that subversive leaflets had been printed at Delhi for distribution among United Provinces police. The All-India Radio broadcast about the police strike in Delhi, which apparently gave an exaggerated account of the facts, had a disturbing effect upon police in Cawnpore and elsewhere.

The overall ration has now been restored to 12 chhataks in all police messes.



12. Communists and Labour Unrest in Madras Province

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Madras Province for the second half of March 1946. File No. 18/3/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Labour

Labour continues to be restless mainly on Communist instigation. In Madras City, the Electric Tramways and Supply Corporation Workers' Union which is sponsored by Communists gave notice of their intention to go on strike from 1st April 1946, their demands being a substantial increase in wages, dearness allowance, leave facilities, etc. The Government decided to appoint an Adjudicator and this was accepted by the workers and the strike has been called off.

In Coimbatore the 'B' Mills of the Coimbatore Spinning and Weaving Mills which is Communist controlled again went to strike on 16th March 1946 on account of the refusal of the management to form piecers into a separate category and to give them an extra Rupee one in wages. As the District Magistrate reports, the strike was on the most frivolous grounds and the management have now declared a lock out. The other mills of the same company are not affected. In the same district, the Cement Workers' Union at Madukkarai has issued a strike notice to take effect from 1st April 1946 demanding fixation of a minimum wages, increased dearness allowance, bonus, etc. In North Arcot, the strike in the Gudiyatham Mills continues while the Beedi Workers, backed by Communists, are also agitating for an increase in their wages. In Guntur, there is a good deal of agitation for higher wages among labourers in Tobacco Firms and some of them been on strike since 24th March 1946. The owners are unwilling to raise the wages since they consider the present wages quite fair. Necessary police bandobust is being given to loyal workers.

In Tinnevely district, there was a strike by cultivators in two villages for a higher share in the produce than hitherto. The local Revenue authorities are trying to effect a compromise.

3.A.iv April

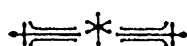
1. Congress Volunteers Replace Patna Striking Constables

News report, 'The boys can do it'. *Free Press Journal*, 5 April 1946

Patna, April 4. Congress volunteers have stepped into the breach created by the police constables' strike in Patna which commenced yesterday and is continuing today. The volunteers were seen this morning at important crossing controlling the vehicular traffic of the town.

Although without any previous training the volunteers are directing the traffic properly holding flags in their hands, and wearing INA badges inscribed with "Kadam Kadam Barhaye Ja".

Gandhi-capped volunteers in khaki uniform went round the town in motor vans today exchanging shifts with those who had been on duty.—API.



2. Sweepers' Strike in Bombay

News report, 'Government's attempt to break sweepers' strike'. *Free Press Journal*, 12 April 1946.

Bombay, Thursday. The strike-fever in the City continues unabated despite the intervention of Mr L.M. Patil, the Minister of Local Self-Government yesterday.

To the spectre of epidemics which hangs over the city and which at any moment may become a grim reality a new and alarming note has crept in with the contemplated move to import strike breakers from the province, and military pickets, according to reports appearing in the local press.

The strikes have been agitated by this news which, they believe, will only serve to aggravate the tenseness of the situation and will certainly lead to clashes between the strikers and the strike-breakers.

There is also a reported move on the part of the sweepers to go on hunger strike for the complete removal of their disabilities including temple entry, admittance into eating houses and restaurants, etc.

In the meantime, the City of Bombay which prided itself on its cleanliness bids fair to become filthiest in either hemisphere. In the congested areas especially, the stench from the accumulated filth and garbage of seven days and the untended drains added to the spell of hot weather is causing people to become sick and faint.

Government Alarmed

That the Government of Bombay is now thoroughly alarmed at the strike situation is evidenced by the conference held at the Secretariat today presided over by the Prime Minister, Mr B.G. Kher and the Ministers for Health and Labour and Home Affairs were present in addition to some military officers.

The Hon'ble Mr Patil said that he was sparing no pains to bring about a settlement both in the interests of the workers and the City. Mr Kanu Gandhi, it is reported, has offered his services in cleaning up the City.

The Conference convened at the Secretariat yesterday by the Minister for Local Self-Government did not yield tangible results, due to the stand taken by Mr S.H. Jhabvala. The Mayor intimated to the Conference that the Municipality was prepared to accept adjudication of arbitration but his offer was also categorically turned down by Mr Jhabvala on behalf of the Sweepers' Union.

The history of the agitation for better conditions for the sweepers and the lower-grade staff was first mooted in the Corporation as far back as 1937, when the issue was shelved. In 1938 a Corporator again raised the issue and a Special Committee was appointed to investigate into the conditions of the lower-grade staff. This Committee, after a year, asked the different unions to submit their case. The Municipal Kamgar Sangh, which is the largest and by far the oldest of them, made the following demands:

1. A minimum wage of not less than Rs 35.
2. Hours of work not more than 44 for clean workers and not more than 40 for unclean workers. Their hours of work ranged from 11½ to 80½ per week.
3. No overtime and in case required to work overtime should be paid double.
4. Permanency after a year of service.

5. Privilege, casual and maternity leave and holidays.
6. Promotions by seniority.
7. Compulsory Provident Fund and Gratuity.

They complained that workers drawing Rs 21 were compelled to pay fines ranging from Rs 1/5/- Rs 5/14/-, which they considered exorbitant, considering their meagre pay. They demanded the application of Section 8 of the Payment Act.

They also called for a change in the muster system. A muster was being called four or five times a day, and an absentee at every muster was fined one anna which fine in certain cases used to go up to Rs 5 per month.

They demanded the application of the same rules that obtained in the Railways regarding suspensions, and dismissals. They called for a charge sheet in such cases.

Housing Conditions

They also complained about their housing conditions. They say that in their houses they do not see the rays of the sun at all. They have no windows. And except in the corridors they have no light in their rooms. For every 25 rooms 4 lavatories are provided. In these one-room tenements as many as 10 to 15 persons are huddled together. They demanded better living conditions. These demands were turned down.

In 1943 Rao Bahadur D.V. Nadkarni, a retired official, was appointed Special Officer to investigate into the conditions and salaries of the sweepers and report thereon. This report was submitted in August 1945. The sweepers complain that has devoted only 30 paras out of 471 to their case. A provision of Rs 15 lakhs was budgeted by the Corporation for implementing some of the suggestions of the Nadkarni Report.

On December 12, 1945, a deputation of the sweepers waited on the Mayor, Dr Alban D'Souza, who assured them that their demand would be considered. Having failed to receive any satisfactory reply, the sweepers served a notice of strike on the Municipality on March 20, 1946 and went on strike on April 5. The Congress Municipal Party considered the situation arising out of the strike on April 6 and agreed to meet some of the demands of the sweepers:

Congress Offer

1. For the first time the low paid staff would be given a grade. The grade would rise from Rs 25 to Rs 35 with an annual increment of Re 1. For those who have already put in a length of service, accumulated promotions would be given.
2. Dearness allowance would continue to be Rs 22 as at present.
3. After one year of satisfactory service they would be made permanent.
4. 15 days yearly leave with pay.
5. 15 days casual leave, not more than 10 days at a time.
6. Half a day off every week.
7. Room rent charged at present will be remitted
8. Those who do not have municipal quarters will be paid at a rate of Rs 6 per family or Rs 3 per head.

Sweepers' Stand

The sweepers refused to accept these concessions. They wanted a minimum basic wage of Rs 35 and a dearness allowance of Rs 25

If these demands were conceded they said, they would not press the others. The Municipal Commissioner then met Mr Deorukhar, the leader of the Municipal Kamgar Sangh. As a result of these talks the sweepers said that they would call off the strike even if they were given Rs 30. The Municipal Commissioner's proposal to raise the basic wage from Rs 25 to Rs 30 was turned down by the Standing Committee, who endorsed the decisions of the Congress Municipal Party. And there the question ended.

3. Bombay Municipality's Offer to Sweepers

Extracts from an article, 'Facts of the sweepers' strike'. *Free Press Journal*, 12 April 1946.

Thirteen-thousand workers in the city are on strike for over a week now.

These 13,000 belong to the following departments: conservancy, engineering, land management, health, water, loading and unloading, Chembur dumping ground, Bandra slaughter-house, garden and market. Out of these 13,000 workers, 8349 are known as unclean workers who attend to drainage, sewage, garbage and the removal of dung.

The unclean workers include 2046 women and 259 dung boys. The number on strike today includes, besides the unclean workers, those attached to pumping stations, gardens and the adult education department.

These people today are paid by the Municipality a fixed pay: The men get Rs 25, the women (sweepers) Rs 21, (bhangi or halolkhore) Rs 23/8/-, the children (dung boys) Rs 18.

The Municipality also pays them a dearness allowance of Rs 22 and provides them with uniforms....

Demands

Their demands also vary considerably but the main items may be set down as follows:

A graded pay with a minimum wage of not less than Rs 35.

Dearness Allowance to be increased to Rs 25 from Rs 22.

Casual leave of 20 days.

Privilege leave of 1 month.

Sick leave of 21 days to be allowed to accumulate up to 42 days.

Free quarters, or in the alternative, house rent at Rs 10 per head.

Weekly off days and all holidays.

Maintenance of a 10 per cent reserve staff to take the place of casual absentees.

Permanency after 6 months' service.

Offer

The Standing Committee of the Corporation estimates the demands to cost them nearly Rs 27 lakhs and they are unable to find the money for it. The Standing Committee's most liberal terms offered to the workers on April 9 are Rs 25-1-55. This graded scale, they state, would enable nearly 4000 workers who have put in 10 years' service to receive immediately a monthly wage of Rs 35 and over 1800 others would also receive wages varying from Rs 30 to Rs 34.

Besides, a special allowance of Rs 5 is paid to those engaged in unclean work. They are also prepared to grant a house rent allowance of Rs 3 per head, with a full weekly holiday, 15 days' casual leave and 15 days' privilege annually. The Dearness Allowance, however, is to be retained at Rs 22....

4. Bombay Sweepers End Strike

Extracts from a news report, 'Bombay sweepers' strike ends'. *Free Press Journal*, 13 April 1946.

Bombay, Friday. Bombay will again breathe pure air from Saturday.

The nine-day old sweepers' strike will end tomorrow afternoon as a result of a compromise arrived at this evening between the representatives of the Municipal Kamgar Sangh, under the leadership of Mr M.S. Dhonde and Mr B.G. Deorukhar and Mr Dahyabhai V. Patel, on behalf on the Standing Committee and Mr U.M. Mirchandani, the Municipal Commissioner....

5. Police Open Fire on Narayanganj (Dhaka) Cotton Mill Workers

Extracts from a report, 'Workers fight policed aided black marketeer bosses'. *People's Age*, 14 April 1946.

Eight thousand Bengali textile workers of the Dhakeswari, Laxminarayan and Chittaranjan Cotton Mills in Narayanganj (Dacca) have been fighting a grim and heroic battle against the combined might of one of Bengal's worst anti-working mill bosses, the wily Surya Bose, Managing Director of the Dhakeswari Cotton Mills, and the Police for over two months.

On the 27th March last, four leading workers, among them two Communists, were shot dead and about 74 workers injured, a large number of them seriously, by one of the most savage and brutal firings, indulged in by the Police and the mill authorities of the Dhakeswari Mills.

Who Controls the Mills?

The Dhakeswari Cotton Mills were started by a group of patriotic Bengalis in the wake of the first Civil Disobedience movement of 1920. After the economic crisis of the thirties—the impoverished middle-class youth of the district joined the mills in hundreds, and today of the mill workers, all of whom are Bengalis, no less than 70 per cent are educated.

Soon after the mills were started, however, a group of most notorious and unscrupulous racketeers got on the Board of Directors of the mills, and started elbowing the patriotic and honest people out. Today they are the masters, and nobody can question their authority.

When P.C. Joshi, the leader of the Indian Communists, visited Narayanganj in January last, the workers of the mills approached the bosses with a proposal that the mills be closed on Saturday, the day Joshi was to address a rally of workers, to enable them to attend the rally, and the workers assured that they would make good the lost time by working on Sunday.

Workers Resist Black-marketing

When the bosses, who had on many previous occasions, entered into such agreements, refused, the workers went on strike, and rallied in thousands to hear Joshi. The bosses retaliated by victimising 10 leading Red flag workers of the four mills.

Along with this, the mill bosses announced that the workers would not get rice at the rate of Rs 10 per maund, at which they had been getting it so far, but at Rs 14 per maund if they did not combine with the bosses in agitating for excluding the mills areas from the rationing scheme which had recently come into force.

The workers point blank refused to aid the black-marketing of the bosses, and gave notice of strike demanding reinstatement of the victimised workers and rice at old rates. The bosses rejected these demands.

The strike thereupon started from the 18th February, 1946....

People Rally Behind Workers

The whole of Dacca has been roused to a pitch of fury by this dastardly mass murder by the Police and the bosses. As soon as the news of firing reached Dacca, the students of the Dacca Medical School, in spite of their examinations, approached the Superintendent, and even though it is against the rules to take their ambulance cars outside Dacca town—they came to Narayanganj and removed the injured to Dacca.

At about 2 o'clock in the morning, eight hours after the incident, a procession of two ambulances and 16 private cars proceeded from Narayanganj to Dacca. All along the route thousands of people lined up on both sides of the streets watching the injured pass by, in grim silence.

The fruit sellers of Dacca are sending baskets of fruit free to the hospital for the injured. Medical stores are supplying free medicines. Bakeries are sending bread to the hospital free of charge for the workers. Literally hundreds of middle-class people crowded into the hospital the next day to see the injured and express their solidarity with the workers.

When the shareholders of the Dhakeswari Mills met in Dacca at the residence of Mr Harrendra Das—a Congress MLC—at their annual general meeting on March 31st, 300 workers went there and demonstrated in front of the meeting hall. All over the place, on the streets, and even inside the meeting hall, armed Police guards were stationed, yet about 300 young boys of the locality gathered in front of the hall and wooed the shareholders as they came out from their usual feast after the meeting.

This mass upsurge in support of the strikers has forced the shareholders to appoint a Committee to enquire into the firing....

The Danger Signals

... The Secretary of the District Muslim League, Shamsuddin Ahmed, and Congress leader, Siris Chatterjee, have offered their services to mediate, but the mills authorities counting on the triumph of anti-Communism are still doggedly refusing to negotiate or show any signs of coming to a settlement....

6. Congress Opposes Communist Militancy in Madras Province

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Madras Province for the first half of April 1946. Public (General) Department, Government of Madras (1946); Tamil Nadu State Archives.

Labour

Congress antagonism to Communists is becoming increasingly manifest in the labour field. In North Arcot Congress speakers have been exhorting the workers of Gudiatam Mills not to resort to strike and assuring them that Congress would take up their cause and would redress their grievances. They also advised workers to liquidate the labour union organised by Communists and to join the Congress. In Coimbatore, Communists are organising the various

classes of labour in a 'united front' against the Congress and several cases of assault have been reported recently. In Malabar the strike in the Aaron Mills at Pappinisseri continues and the Collector reports that the affair has developed into a trail of strength between the Congress supported management and the Communist Labour Union. In Madras, on the other hand, it is interesting to note that the Electric Tramway and Supply Corporation Workers Union Reform Committee, which is controlled by the Congress, has been criticising the Communist Executive for withdrawing their notice of strike following the appointment of an adjudicator.

In Guntur District the tobacco strike, mentioned in my last report, led to various cases of assault and the local authorities had to pass order under Sec. 144. The strike was, however, called off on 8-4-1946 on a promise of arbitration by the District Magistrate.

In Vizagapatam workers in the Chittavalsa Jute mills, incited by Communists, went on strike on 5-4-46. The working hours had been reduced from 60 to 54 hours per week and the workers' demands appear to be that there should be no reduction in wages with the reduction of hours, that the mills should work six days of 9 hours, and that the Dearness allowance of Rs 16 should be given all in cash instead of the present offer of Rs 12 in cash and Rs 4 in the shape of subsidised rations. The Collector and the local conciliation officer intervened promising adjudication, if necessary, and the workers are likely to call off the strike. In Coimbatore the Communist controlled cement workers of Madukarai went on strike on 29-3-46. In Coconada the conservancy staff of the Municipality incited also by Communists have given notice of strike demanding more pay, uniform, etc. Congressmen are reported to be opposed to the strike and are prepared to carry on the conservancy work should the strike come off.

In Madras city, workers in Messrs Spencer & Co demanded a full holiday for Tamil New Year's day on 13-4-46 instead of the usual half holiday as the day fell on a Saturday and on its refusal by the management, staged a stay-in strike following which the management declared that all who had struck had terminated their employment and should apply for reemployment. The MSM Railway union at Perambur have decided to hold a strike ballot before 25-4-1946 and the SIR Labour Union at Chingleput is also following their example.

Agrarian unrest is also reported from North Malabar, mainly due to Communist influence. In Tinnevely, the dispute between landlords and cultivators, mentioned in my last report, has been settled, the former agreeing to pay higher wages.

7. Government of Madras Employees Restive

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Madras Province for the first half of April 1946. Public (General) Department, Government of Madras (1946); Tamil Nadu State Archives.

Miscellaneous

The series of recent strikes in the labour field and threat of strikes such as that by the Posts & Telegraphs Union, are now showing their effect on employees of this Government. In Madras City the men of the Armed Reserve of the City Police and a majority of the men in the City Divisions refused to draw their pay on 1-4-1946, on the ground that it was not adequate, though they continued to do their duty. The Madras City Police Constabulary Association was revived and they have formulated certain proposals, the principal request being an increase of pay for constables from Rs 20 to Rs 30. Most of the Division men took their pay on the 3rd and 4th and the men of the Armed Reserve on 8-4-1946. The Government have now introduced

new revised scales with an increase of pay for all grades upto the rank of Inspector the increase in the case of constables being by about one third of the previous pay. Discontent is however still reported from various Districts and posters and leaflets issued by a "Federation of Police Constables" calling for a strike on 20-4-1946 have been found.

Meanwhile the agitation has spread to the other branches of the Police and on 16th April 1946, 235 out of 508 men of the Malabar Special Police stationed in Madras City refused to their duty. The worst affected company was disbanded and the permanent and temporary men, who were willing to continue are to be distributed among other companies. Only 7 out of the 235 men who refused duty were permanent members of the force.

The local Non-Gazetted Officers Association has also sent up a demand for more dearness allowance affirming their decision to wear distress badges, if this is not conceded.

Many Districts also report discontent among the Village Officers. Owing to increase of work involved in food procurement and rationing, Government have sanctioned an extra allowance of Rs 3 per month for village Karnams and a bonus of Rs 6 per annum for village Headmen. This has not, however, satisfied them and in Chingleput and South Arcot Districts, village officers in certain areas are reported to be threatening a strike, if further concessions are not given. In Kurnool the Village Officers of one taluk held a conference at which they passed a series of resolutions demanding more remuneration.

8. Bombay Dockyard and Railway Workers Give Notice of Strike

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Bombay Province for the first half of April 1946. File No. 18/4/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Labour

... On April 2nd 1946 Bombay Port Trust Authorities received a memorandum from the United Bombay Port Trust Employees' Conference regarding the following demands of the workers, namely, victory and war bonuses; general revision of scales of pay; consolidation of dearness allowance with the pay; confirmation after one year's service and retrenchment only in consultation with organised labour.

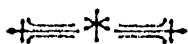
HMT Dockyard Workers' Union have also given a notice of one day's strike on the 15th April 1946 to give an expression to the workers' protest against "the callousness of authorities towards their pressing demands and grievances". The demands include victory and war bonuses, reinstatement of discharged workers and restoration of the cut in rations.

There were a number of minor lighting [lightening] strikes in the textile mills in Bombay.

Meetings are being held under the auspices of the GIP and BB&CI Railwaymen's Union where workers are exhorted to vote in favour of strike in the ballot shortly to be held.

The Textile Mills of Ahmedabad are experiencing a coal shortage. If the position does not improve the mills may shortly have to be closed for some days.

The number of retrenched workers in Bombay stood at 24,445 on the 8th April 1946.



9. Trouble in Police Ranks of Calcutta and Dhaka

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Bengal for the first half of April 1946. File No. 18/4/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Political

... Leaflets have been found posted up at numerous places in Dacca recently notifying an intention of police constables to have a one-day strike unless certain demands for the betterment of their economic conditions are satisfied. It is apprehended that the other subordinate officers are in sympathy with them. Similar leaflets have been noticed in Calcutta also and there is a move afoot, sponsored by one of the Communist parties, to work up an agitation among the lower ranks of the police forces. The matter is engaging the attention of Government.

10. Discontent Among Government Employees of the United Provinces

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for the United Provinces for the first half of April 1946. File No. 18/4/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Industrial

Discontent and unrest, fostered wherever possible by Communists, continue, but had no very serious results during the fortnight in ordinary labour circles. Unrest among Government servants, however, is spreading. It is reported that Postal employees are not satisfied with the increase of Rs 5 sanctioned by the Government of India. Meanwhile, encouraged by the success of the Postal strike, threat, Provincial Government servants have been encouraged to think in similar terms. Patwaris in many districts went on strike, in many cases without notice, at a time when they were required to work under pressure in connexion with the food procurement scheme. They have been warned that Government will not consider their demands so long as they are not put forward in departmentally or under the Essential Services Ordinance. By the end of the fortnight patwaris in some districts had begun to return to their duties. With the restoration of the overall of 12 chhataks there has been no further trouble in the Police, but there is an undercurrent of discontent over salaries, which has been encouraged by the reports of increments in police pay which have been granted in other provinces. This matter is engaging the attention of Government. Meetings at Cawnpore and Meerut of Government Ministerial Staff Associations have voiced demands for an improvement in wages and general service conditions, while municipal and district board teachers and demanding increases in their pay and allowances, and employees of the Government Press and the Electric Supply Co at Allahabad threaten to strike if their demands are not conceded.

The Lucknow EIR Workshop employees threaten a strike on all-India basis if their demands are not granted, and a printed pamphlet issued by the EIR Employees Association, Calcutta, stating that a strike ballot will be held between April 14 and 24, has come to notice. A strike is also threatened by the locomotive firemen at Moradabad. The reduction in the food ration has resulted in unrest in the Loco Workshop at Gorakhpur, where a strike is threatened if the ration is not restored.

Municipal sweepers in Konch (Jalaun district) went on strike on April 9 in consequence of the arrest of certain of them failing to obey a summons to answer charges of absence from duty brought against them by the Municipal Board....

11. M.K. Bose Protest Government Favouritism

Towards M.N. Roy's Indian Federation of Labour

Press statement by Mrinal Kanti Bose, President, All India Trade Union Congress, published in *Free Press Journal*, 18 April 1946, under the heading 'Govt.'s labour policy'. A cutting is enclosed in the file. File No. 9; All India Trade Union Congress Papers (1946); Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

I do not know if the Cabinet Mission that is in this country will inaugurate a new policy but I have to say with regret that the Govt of India's policy in regard to labour remains the same, a policy of minimising the importance of the AITUC, the only representative body of the Indian working class, and raising by artificial means the stock of Mr M.N. Roy's Indian Federation of Labour (IFL). It is well-known that the IFL is a body subsidised by the Govt of India and that Govt has secured for it recognition by the International Trade Union organisation, thereby placing it on the same level as the AITUC. Recently the Govt of India has asked the organisations of workers and employers of India to give their recommendations to that body regarding the nomination of India Workers' Delegate and Advisers to the 29th session of the International Labour Conference to be held at Montreal (Canada) from 19th Sept. 1946. It is the intention of the Govt, in accordance with policy it has followed, to accept only the recommendations made by the IFL to the exclusion of the AITUC. The AITUC has always protested against the policy of the Govt of India. What is the membership of the IFL? Will the Government of India have the fairness to institute an independent enquiry? It is well known that the IFL has no membership worth the name and no following among the workers. I do not know if the Govt of India will even now be honest enough to recognise facts as they are. If it does not, I hope, the provincial Government that are now being constituted on a popular basis would do so and see that the wedge driven into the labour movement by the Govt of India (in accordance with its political policy) may be withdrawn or at any rate its evil effects nullified.

The Govt of India has also asked for nominees from the IFL for the Iron and Steel Production Committee of the International Labour Conference. The policy is the same as in regard to the nomination of delegates for the General Body of the ILO and on behalf of the AITUC I strongly protest against it.

12. AITUC Report on Labour Situation (July 1945-April 1946)

Extracts from the All India Trade Union Congress Interim Report (1 July 1945-15 April 1946), presented by the General Secretary to the General Council, All India Trade Union Congress; Bombay, 16 April 1946. File No. 91; All India Trade Union Congress Papers (1946); Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

Bombay
16 April 1946.

Immediately after the last meeting of the General Council, the Pacific war ended and the questions of large scale unemployment, cuts in wages and dearness allowance became very

pressing. The discontent amongst the workers that was growing during the war period became acute and resulted in many strikes all over the country.

The second main issue of the period was provided by the election to the Central and Provincial Legislatures. This is closely followed by the question of political settlement with India. At the moment the attention of the entire country is directed towards the problem of political settlement.

Even under these circumstances, when the attention of different political parties and practically the whole of India is concentrated on the political issues, Trade Union organisers had to face the task of organising active resistance against cut in wages and dearness allowance.

Strength of the AITUC

	No. of Unions affiliated	Membership
A. In July 1945	401	4,51,915
New affiliations granted at Calcutta	20	40,049
Increased membership granted at Calcutta	—	10,581
Total	421	5,02,545
B. Unions Disaffiliated at Calcutta Unions disaffiliated on 2nd	16	5,667
February as per resolution of GC	10	9,046
Decrease in membership granted at Calcutta	—	25,306
Total	26	40,019
Total A + Total B	395	4,62,526

The Head office of the AITUC ... put before the different constituents the following five point programme of immediate demands and asked all the Unions to concentrate on it during their work.

1. The maintenance of at least the present employment level;
2. Consolidation of dearness allowance with the basic rates of pay and fixation of the minimum wage;
3. An eight hour day and a forty hours week;
4. Speedy enforcement of social security measures such as health insurance and unemployment benefit and old age pensions;
5. Recognition of Trade Unions under proper conditions consistently with the complete freedom of the workers.

Representations to Governments

The AITUC made representations to the Government of India on the following subjects: (1) Immediate adequate payment or compensation for involuntary unemployment due to shortage of coal and raw materials, etc.; (2) Adequate compensation to those who are thrown out of employment as a result of retrenchment or demobilisation; (3) Coal shortage, cloth shortage, Imports and effects on employment; (4) Appointment of Mine Workers' representatives on the Coal Reorganisation Committee; (5) Appointment of AITUC (Labour) representatives on Food Policy Committee and Advisory Board for Indian Electricity; (6) Need for full publication of the Adjudicator's Awards and need to make the necessary amendment

in the Defence of India Rules; (7) Need for starting the practice of consulting the National Organisation of Labour before the Government replies to questionnaires of the ILO; (8) Necessity of paying the expenses of Technical experts appointed by labour to accompany Labour Delegation to the ILO Industrial Committees and (9) Challenging the claim of the Indian Federation of Labour to represent Indian workers at ILO....

Office Bearers' Tour

Immediately on his return from London, Com S.A. Dange took a tour of South India and inaugurated the Madras Provincial Conference, presided over the Madras Provincial Textile Conference, addressed meetings Calicut, Coimbatore, Salem, Madras, Madura, Ambasamudram, Vikramasingapuram, Pondicherry, Trichinopoly and Sholapur and emphasised the five point programme of the AITUC given in the January number of the 'Trade Union Record'.

Comrade Manek Gandhi attended the Central India and Rajaputana Conference and addressed the Rally of the railway workers in connection with anti-retrenchment at Ajmer and Udaipur.

Com S.S. Mirajkar specially went to Gwalior to enquire into the firing on the textile workers of the Shri J.C. Mills and gave assistance to the Gwalior Mazdur Sabha.

Tripartite Labour Conference

The seventh session of the Tripartite Labour Conference was held on 27th and 28th November 1945. The AITUC was represented by Coms. V.V. Giri, P. Rama Murthi, Harihar Nath Shastri, Zulmiram Chowdhary (Delegates) and Coms. Shanta Mukherjee, Manek Gandhi and Indrajit Gupta (Advisers). Detailed report of the work done by our delegation has already appeared in the 'Trade Union Record' for December 1945.

Since the Conference, the Factories Act 1934, has been amended. The weekly hours of work in non-seasonal factories are reduced from 54 to 48, while those for seasonal factories are reduced from 60 to 50 per week. Maximum hours of work per day are reduced from 10 to 9. Overtime payment for work done is to be calculated at the rate of double the ordinary rate of pay. The Act will come into operation from 1st August 1946.

International Labour Conference

The General Council in its meeting held at Calcutta recommended the names of Comrades N.M. Joshi (Delegate), S.S. Mirajkar, R.A. Khedgikar, Abdul Momin and Shibnath Banerjee (in whose absence P.R.K. Sharma) (Advisers) as the Indian Workers' Delegation to the 27th Session of the International Labour Organisation. Immediately after the General Council meeting we received a letter from the Government of India suggesting that we should consider the advisability of making, in so far as this may be found possible, selections of our Delegation from various communities. I wrote to the Government that as the General Council had already met and decided upon the Delegation taking into consideration all the claims, I could only add to the number if the Government of India agreed to permit one more adviser to attend the ILO. On receiving the reply in the affirmative, I appointed in consultation with the President and Bombay members of the Working Committee Com R.B. More as an additional adviser to the ILO.

Report of the work done at the ILO Conference has already appeared in the Document number of the *Trade Union Record*...

World Federation of Trade Unions

On behalf of the AITUC Coms S.A. Dange and R.A. Khedgikar attended the second session of the World Trade Union Congress held in Paris in September–October 1945, which later on converted itself into the first Congress of the World Federation of Trade Unions. Report of the work done by our delegation appears in the *Trade Union Record* for December 1945.

Our delegation was successful in securing a seat for India on the Executive Committee and Com S.A. Dange have been appointed as our representative. The IFL and the AITUC will have to take this seat at alternate sittings of the Executive Committee. This has been agreed to only as a temporary agreement and our right to raise the question again has been reserved. Com R.A. Khedgikar was nominated as a member of the General Council of the WFTU with Com Dange as a substitute member. Further our delegation was successful in getting a special concession in affiliation fees for the AITUC Fees that we are asked to pay is £1 for 1000 membership, while the maximum is £4 for 1000. We have approached the Executive Committee of the WFTU to grant us further reduction in fees taking into consideration our low finances....

Important Strikes

The period of nine months from September 1945 to March 1946 witnessed very many big strikes. Important amongst them were the strikes of Calcutta Tramway men, BEST Workers, Bombay EI Railway Press Workers, Calcutta, Kesoram Mill Workers, BEST Scheduled Staff and Gwalior and Ratlam Textile Workers which were completely successful. The strike of the Textile workers of Gujarat excluding Ahmedabad embracing 13,000 workers was partially successful. The strike of the Textile Workers in CP and Berar numbering 30,000 was to be withdrawn as it took an ugly and communal turn.

The workers in most of the industrial centres all over India went on one day strike for the release of INA prisoners. Bombay workers observed two days strike in support of the demands of the RIN ratings and workers in the majority industrial centres of India observed one day strike against the Bombay firing and in support of the RIN strikers.

The period also witnessed strikes of RAF personnel, sepoys, workers in Government presses and Primary teachers for the redress of their grievances and satisfaction of their demands.

One peculiar feature of these strikes is the complete unity amongst the workers and the general solidarity and sympathy of the public towards the demands of the strikes.

The general strike of Postal and Telegraph workers was averted by the Government granting a small cash benefit immediately and referring some of the other demands to an Adjudicator.

AIRF Prepares for Strike

As the Government of India did not, till the end of March, appoint an adjudicator for the demands of the AIRF formulated at their Madras meeting, strike ballots are already being taken by different Railway Unions. The AIRF General Council is expected to meet on the 1st of May to review the situation and take all necessary steps to make it successful....

Food Situation

In the month of February, the Government of India announced cut in the rations of food grains as the food situation became very critical. The workers ration was proportionately cut more than those of the non-workers. This cut in the rations led to great discontent amongst the workers. The Unions all over India protested against, and requested the Government to withdraw, the cut. Lakhs of workers went on protest strike to get the cut in ration restore[d].

Most important strike[s] amongst these being the strike of jute and factory workers in Bengal embracing more than one lac workers which lasted for more than 3 weeks and the sit-down strike at Kachrapara Work of the BA Rly which lasted for 12 days.

General Secretary.

13. Striking Policemen of Madras Discharged from Duty

News report, '104 Madras Policemen sacked and paid off'. *Free Press Journal*, 18 April 1946.

Madras, April 17. "A police force on which reliance cannot be placed is a danger to any Government present or future," says a Press Note issued today by the Government of Madras announcing that 235 men (less than half the strength) of the Malabar Special Police companies stationed in Madras refused duty yesterday morning on various grounds, the chief of which was that their pay was inadequate.

They had already been informed, that their request for increased pay, etc., was under consideration of the Government. In view of the past good record of the Malabar Special Police and the Government's belief that the majority of those who had refused duty had been misled by irresponsible agitators, Government decided not to take more severe disciplinary action, but to disband 'J' Company which contained a large proportion of the men that had refused duty. The men who did not refused duty were transferred from 'J' Company to other companies and 104 men of 'J' Company were disbanded and paid off yesterday evening with one month's pay in lieu of notice and given railway tickets to their homes.

Severe Action in Future

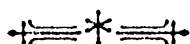
Similar action is being taken in respect of men who refused duty in other companies. Government however wish to make it quite clear that after this warning further acts indiscipline in any MSP Company, either in Madras or elsewhere, will be viewed with greater severity.

To make clear the legitimate grievances are not neglected, Government wish to state that they had previously sought the approval of the Governor-General to their proposal for increase of pay for constables and NOC's of the MSP. This approval was received yesterday and orders to this effect have already been issued.

Temporary Hands

Almost all the men who went on strike yesterday—barring some ten—were temporary hands. When the men struck work, arrangements were made at once to get in additional police for bandobust purposes. The strikers were asked to deposit their arms with the officials which they did. They were then cordoned off from the rest of the force who were still carrying on their duties.

Subsequently orders were received from Government discharging these men. The discharged men were then transported in batches in lorries to central station from where they were sent back to Malabar. The few permanent hands who joined the strike have been placed under suspension.— API.



14. Bihar Ministry Urged to Make Concessions to Striking Constables

Article, 'Anti-imperialist awakening vilified as anti-Congress'. *People's Age*, 21 April 1946.

On the 3rd of April, ten thousand policemen went on strike in Bihar. Everywhere it was the ration cut imposed in the middle of March which had brought matters to a head. Spontaneous token strikes had taken place throughout the second half of March in various districts.

It was the Delhi Police strike of March 21st-22nd which inspired Bihar's Policemen to more organised forms of action. They read in the Nationalist Press of the countrywide support for the demands of Delhi's Policemen. They acclaimed Mr Asaf Ali's Adjournment Motion in the Central Assembly to discuss "the situation created in Delhi by the maladministration of the Police Department resulting in the strike by a large number of Policemen "

Strike Demands

Confident that they too would have vigorous Congress support for their demands, the Bihar Police, after a one-day hunger strike in support of their Delhi comrades, met together, set up District Committees and formulated their demands.

The first group of demands asked for an increase in pay Rs 100 per month, and in the quotas of the cloth and food rations. Cheap stores and free family quarters were also demanded.

The second group of demands was concerned with better service conditions, leave rules, right of appeals to authorities higher than the Superintendent, trial by Law Courts, etc.

The third group related to elementary democratic and civil rights; facilities for the education of their children, adequate medical treatment, the right to form their own organisation, the right to attend public meetings and the right to vote in general elections.

The whole movement behind the organisation of the Policemen in support of these demands was carried out in a spirit of intense anti-British patriotic fervour.

The *Rashtravani* (organ of the Congress Premier, Babu Srikrishna Sinha) on the 29th and 30th March reported how, while formulating these demands at meetings in various districts, the Policemen "rent the air with Nationalist slogans" like "Inquilab Zindabad", "Britishers Quit India", and "Jai Hind".

Higher Police Officials' Strike Breaking

Higher Police officials, notorious for the unparalleled repression they let loose in 1942, were thoroughly alarmed at the growing patriotic sentiment among 'their men'. Everywhere they sought to crush the awakened constables.

According to a report in the *Searchlight* (Patna Nationalist daily), on the 1st of April, Mr D.S. Sinha, the Superintendent of Police of Hazaribagh district addressed a meeting of the Police of his district. He put forward the strange thesis that "the things the constables are purchasing at Rs 30 will cost them Rs 100 if their pay is increased to Rs 100," ended up by warning them that if they struck work, they would be prosecuted under the Police Act, the Essential Services Ordinance, etc.

In every district, similar attempts were made by the Police officials to threaten the Policemen into submission.

But all these attempts failed. Fully confident of Congress support, the constables went ahead with their plans to call a strike on the 3rd of April, by which date their preparations were to be completed.

It was in the midst of their preparation, on the 2nd of April, that the Congress Ministry came into power.

The Policemen hailed the advent of Congress Raj and felt almost certain that their demands would be met. They knew, however, that between them and the Ministry stood the corrupt and today Police officials, who wanted to maintain a set of dumb-driven constables who could be used whenever necessary against the common people.

In the belief that these officials would prevent the Ministry from learning the true facts of their case, the Policemen did not alter their previously planned programme to go on strike on the 3rd. Thus they hoped to draw the Ministry's attention to their demands, and go back to work as soon as they had secured an assurance from the Ministry that their just grievances would be redressed.

Bogey of Anti-Congress Sabotage

The Police officials were, however, busy spreading the lie that the strike was calculated to undermine the prestige of the Ministry, though they knew full well that the strike had been developing long before the Ministry came to power, and that unrest in the Police was not confined to Bihar, but was spreading throughout the country.

This story was unfortunately swallowed by the entire Nationalist Press.

Thus the *Searchlight* wrote on April 5th: "In Patna, men with certain communal political affiliations are busy at work and are in high glee."

The same *Rashtravani* which had earlier reported the Policemen's slogans like "Inquilab Zindabad" and "Jai Hind" now on April 6th referred to "men belonging to certain traitor parties" who have provoked the strike so as to "put impediments in the path of the Congress Ministry and to discredit it!"

The Police officials led by Mr Creed, the Inspector General, who had tried every possible method to break the strike, were delighted when they found the Nationalist Press toeing their line.

Most disappointing of all was the fact that the Ministry succumbed entirely to this poisonous propaganda and joined with the officials to suppress the strike.

What officials could never do, the Ministers did. The Finance Minister Shri Anugraha Narain Sinha, flew to Mazaffarpur, after consultations with the Commissioner of the division, and compelled the strikers to resume work, assuring them that their demands would be considered.

Blacklegging or Patriotic Service?

In most districts on the appeal and assurances of Congress leaders, the strike was called off.

In Patna, however, the constables were alarmed at what they thought was the complete lining up of the Ministry and the Congress Press with their hated enemies - the Police officials. And so they refused to go back to work without some concrete gesture from the Ministry.

Now followed a Conference between Babu Rajendra Prasad and the Ministers. Rajen Babu is reported to have advised the Premier to give the strikers a time limit in which to return to work or face dismissal. That night a Conference was held at the Patna Congress headquarters, where a Minister declared that the Government were prepared to go to any lengths to crush

the strike. Here also a call was given for volunteers who would take up Police work in order to break the strike.

The Students' Congress leaders repeated this call for volunteers—and so began what in normal language is known as blacklegging, but what was described in this case as patriotic service. To the shame of the Tricolour and INA badges which they displayed, young Congress lads were made to take place of the strikers.

The Ministry is even reported to have called in the Military to stand by "in case of emergency". It is said that British Tommies were sent to Bhagalpur, and Baluchis to Monghyr. Patna, Muzzaffarpur and Ranchi, of course, have their own cantonments.

10,000 for National Movement or Against?

Thus the strike was crushed, and the newly roused patriotic fervour of Bihar's Policemen received a cruel blow.

The Congress Ministry had the opportunity of winning for the National cause ten thousand men if it had stood by them, instead of with the heated high officials.

Even now, if it really changes its attitude towards the constables, and examines their demands with the same sympathy as shown by the Congress in Delhi in exactly similar circumstances, then it can help to pave the way for that unity between the civilians, the Police and the Army, which is so essential for our Freedom Movement.

15. Bombay Corporation Criticised for Role in Sweepers' Strike

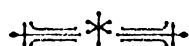
Extracts from a report, 'Bombay sweepers' fight for justice and win'. *People's Age*, 21 April 1946.

The eight day strike of over 12,000 menial workers of the Bombay Municipality, for increase in basic wages and better service conditions, has ended in a mighty victory. In these eight days, they fought and won against a callous Municipal Corporation, led by the Congress Municipal Party, a hurricane press campaign of lies and distortions, the Congress Government's threat to use the army personnel to break the strike and paid goondas trying to provoke the citizens carrying on a self-help campaign to preserve the city's health....

Their Demands

... A Corporation with a budget of rupees five crores seven lakhs haggled over these reasonable demands and fought the strike for eight days under the leadership of S.K. Patil, leader of the Congress Municipal Party and General Secretary of the Bombay Provincial Congress Committee. In was a question of just Rs 12½ lakhs over the above what they had already sanctioned. But they refused to yield for eight days, unmindful of the menace to the health of Bombay's 22 lakh citizens.

A prejudiced press flashed headlines against the "twin menace of Ambedkarites and Communists" (the biggest single organisation of these workers, the Municipal Kamgar Sangh, is led by the Scheduled Castes Federation (SCF) the Communists were condemned because they fully supported the sweeper's just demands)....



16. Dhaka Police Constables Demonstrate

News report, 'Dacca policemen on strike'. *Hindustan Times*, 21 April 1946.

Dacca, April 20. Police constables went on strike today as a protest against non-fulfilment of their demands. They marched in procession shouting slogans demanding redress of their grievances.

According to the strikers, it was arranged that constables in the district should also go on strike simultaneously but there is no confirmation so far of any strike by policemen in mufassil areas. — API.

17. Labour Unrest in Madras Province

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Madras Provinces for the second half of April 1946. File No. 18/4/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Labour

Labour continues to show increasing signs of unrest and a number of strikes have been reported this fortnight. The most serious among them has been another strike (a legal one) by the workers of Sri Rama Vilas Motor Service Company in Madura which resulted in picketing, and frequent clashes between strikers and loyal workers. For a time, the buses and lorries of the Company were taken under the police escort. Women picketers who sat on the road also appeared on the scene.

There was a continuing strain on the police and the possibility of a mob outbreak. So on the advice of the Collector, the Company has given up the running of its vehicles for the present. The promoters of the illegal strike on April 4 are being prosecuted and many of the picketers have been charged under the Criminal Law Amendment Act in the present strike.

There has been trouble again in the Chittivalsa Jute Mills in Vizagapatam. A good many of the workers resumed work on the 15th April, but as a result of Communist instigation the numbers gradually dwindled down again until the mills had to be closed on the 17th. Meanwhile, it is understood that Jute Mills Association in Calcutta have just sanctioned an increase of 15 per cent in the basic rate of wages and this may help in settling the strike. The Collector has been asked to send up proposals for the appointment of an Arbitrator or of a Chairman for a Board of Conciliation in case no other satisfactory arrangement can be made.

There was also a sudden strike in the Nellimerla Jute Mill in the same district on 16-4-1946 on account of disciplinary action taken against a worker for slackness. On the intervention of the local authorities the worker was let off with a warning and the strikers resumed work on the 18th.

In North Arcot, Beedi labourers in a number of towns have gone on strike demanding higher wages. Precautionary measures were taken under Section 144 Criminal Procedure Code to prevent disorder. The Collector held negotiations with both parties as a result of which the wages have been raised and it is hoped that the strikers will resume work shortly.

In Mangalore, about 750 workers in Messrs Pierce Leslie & Co Cashewnut Factory struck work in 15-4-1946 demanding increased wages, mainly under Communist instigation. The management agreed to give the workers dearness allowance equal to the daily wages and the strike was called off on the 19th.

In Madras City, about 500 workers of Messrs Spencer & Co are still on strike and the management have been enlisting new hands. Picketing by strikers continues on a small scale and so far 35 persons have been arrested under the City Police Act for obstruction or disorderly behaviour.

The PWD Workers' Union has given a notice of strike over the question of payment of arrears of dearness allowance, increase of house allowance, enhanced rates of wages, etc. The strike notice should have expired on 30-4-1946 but it has now been withdrawn on the promise that the Government would look into the question of arbitration of these points.

It was mentioned in my last report the Railway Workers have been conducting strike ballots and this has resulted in an overwhelming majority for strike at all centres. Out of the 1420 members of the Madras and Southern Mahratta Railway Employees Union (NGO Branch), 1409 voted for strike and only 11 against....

18. Strikes Spread Across Bengal

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Bengal for the second half of April 1946. File No. 18/4/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Political

8. The intention of the police constables at Dacca to have a one day's strike unless certain demands for the betterment of their economic conditions were satisfied, referred to in the last report, resulted in the holding of a Protest Day on the 20th when the city police constables, joined by some recruits and some of the Special Armed Force, refused to do duty. The ringleader was dismissed, but the strikers refused to carry out their duties and were at first somewhat truculent, refusing to send a deputation to meet the Superintendent of Police. Later in the day, however, they became quiet and orderly though still refusing to work. The Inspector General visited the city on the 21st and listened to their grievances and informed them that if they carried out their duties as police officers and waited patiently for orders on the proposals which were under consideration of Government their dereliction of duty would be overlooked. On this assurance the strikers returned to work. Leaflets similar to those circulated in Dacca has also been circulated in a number of other districts in the Province, including Calcutta, but except in Chittagong no heed appears to have been paid to them. Incidentally the attempt of two constables from Dacca to bring out the Mymensingh constables not only failed in its object but led to their prompt arrest by a Havildar. In Chittagong petitions, in the form of copies of the Dacca strike notice, were handed in by a number of NCO's and constables but, following a visit of the Range Deputy Inspector-General and so the assurance that everything possible was being done to improve their lot, the men were persuaded to take back their notices. The problem of additional concessions that should be granted to the subordinate ranks of the police is under the active consideration of Government....

Labour

11. The strike in the Dhakeswari Cotton Mills near Dacca, referred to in the last report, still continues though the employers have accepted terms which it is believed will prove acceptable to the workers. Should this be the case, the other mills will probably follow suit and an early settlement is hoped for.

12. Almost the entire labour force of over 600 employed by the Bata Shoe Company at their factory at Batanagar near Calcutta went on strike on the 18th. The firm is perhaps the best employer of labour in the Province and the strike, though expected, is quite unjustified.

13. Considerable embarrassment has been caused to Government by the strike of the Auxiliary Fire Services in Calcutta. The strikers, numbering some 1100, demand that Government's retrenchment proposals should be stopped, that there should be a reduction in working hours, and that there should be a revision of scales of pay. Several meetings have been held by the strikers in support of their demands which are now under the consideration of Government.

14. The strike of the Bengal Government Press workers, foreshadowed in the last report, has not yet materialised. There are no strikes in the Provinces ostensibly on the food cut issue.

19. Labour Unrest in the United Provinces

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for the United Provinces for the second half April 1946. File No. 18/4/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Industrial

The increase in restiveness among labour during the first half of the month, which was referred to in my last report, is confirmed by reports received, since I wrote, of a number of strikes in Cawnpore, Unao and Hathras, and during the second half of the month the spread of this unrest among Government servants has become more pronounced. Strike ballots taken by the railway worker's union on April 29 are believed to have resulted in a majority vote in favour of an all-India railway strike. Communists and other left-wing workers have taken a large part in fomenting this trouble. On May 1 what has been called a token strike, but what may have been a rehearsal, took place when traffic was brought to a standstill on the North Western Railway from 7 o'clock until 11 o'clock in the morning by a strike of loco operatives. The strike of patwaris, which was practically confined to the Meerut and Rohilkhand divisions, has come to an end there, but patwaris of other districts threaten to strike in the near future. Ministerial Government servants, chaprasis and district board teachers here and there are agitating or threatening to strike to secure improvement in their conditions of service. Ministerial servants ask in particular for an increase in basic salary, the substitution of a contributory provident fund for pension and for, among other things, a 33-hour week inclusive of the luncheon hour.

20. Bihar Railwaymen Ballot for Strike

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Bihar for the second half of April 1946. File No. 18/4/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Labour

The Tinsplate Company Union's strike still continues peacefully, but Government have referred the matter to adjudication under Defence of India Rule 81. Balloting for a strike on the railways has been taking place and there has been a good deal of canvassing in favour of the strike by Shibnath Banarji, M.L.A. of Bengal.

The strike of the Gaya Cotton and Jute Mills continues and the workers of the Phulwari Cotton Mills in Patna district went on strike on the 18th April.

A very big rally of workers was organised by Professor Bari at Jamshedpur on the 21st April. There is no doubt that he has a great hold over the Jamshedpur labour and has met with considerable success in ousting the Congress Socialist Party and other left-wing elements there.

21. Union Rivalry Amongst Assam Railwaymen

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Assam for the second half of April 1946. File No. 18/4/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Labour

The rival Unions are working hard to promote support for a strike on the Railway. The Bengal and Assam Railway Workers' Union, which is supported by the Communists, has been making play over the ration reduction but is reported to be losing ground as against the Bengal and Assam Railway Employees' Association which has the support of the Congress. It is understood that the Muslim League Union has been instructed to oppose a strike. There is believed to be an overwhelming majority in favour of a strike among the non-Muslim Unions.

A visit to the Lakhimpur and Silchar areas by three lady leaders, Mrs Kamala Devi Chattopadhyaya, Dr Maitrayee Bose and Mrs Renuka Roy, appears to have been poorly organised and to have given some trouble to the authorities of the tea estates and the Assam Oil Company by not conforming to programme.

There was a petty strike on an Indian-owned garden in Darrang District. The only other noticeable labour troubles have been amongst the Municipal sweepers, on whom the local Communist leaders have tended to concentrate.

3.A.v May

1. Calcutta May Day Rally Addressed by R. Palme Dutt

Report of the General Secretary, Bengal Provincial Committee, All India Trade Union Congress, Calcutta, forwarded to the Editor, *Trade Union Record*, Bombay; Calcutta, 2 May 1946. File No. 50; All India Trade Union Congress Papers (1946); Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

May Day Rally at Calcutta

On the occasion of the May Day a man[m]oth rally of the workers of Calcutta and suburbs was organised by the Bengal Provincial Committee of the All India Trade Union Congress. Though it was a weekday and for that a poor gathering was apprehended the workers of Calcutta proved beyond doubt their solidarity with the international working class when more than 15,000 of them in big and small processions with music bands and TUC flags in their hands attended the rally. The whole maidan around the Octerloney monument was decorated with flags and fastoons [festoons] and other posters in a luxurious manner.

Amidst shouts of "TU Congress Zindabad", Comrade Mirnal Kanti Bose took the chair who in his presidential address spoke at length about the working class movement and the significance of the May Day.

Then the international stalwart of the revolutionary labour movement Com R.P. Dutt rose to speak. On behalf of the British working class he at first paid a glowing tribute to the Indian workers; then he said about the international significance of the May Day. "It is after the crushing defeat of the Fascist gangsters," he said "we are celebrating the May Day. But do not forget that the remnants of Fascism and other reactionary forces are still alive and they are conspiring to wage war against the people of the world. The workers of Europe are marching ahead and are out to destroy these enslavers of human race. Hence a more solid unity of the working class of the world is necessary." Then he spoke about Indian independence and assured full support and cooperation of the British working class with any revolutionary movement that might be launched against British imperialism in India. He further called upon the Indian workers to be on guard about mass retrenchment, wage cut[s] and other mischievous move[s] that were being designed by the capitalists of this country and appealed to them to fight those back at any cost.

Dr Maitrayee Bose then moved a resolution on 'Faith in Socialist State'. It was supported by Dr Bhupendra Nath Dutt and accepted unanimously. Another resolution of 'Social Security' was moved by Com S.K. Pramanik. It was supported by Comrades Abdul Momin and Tashil Ahmed and adopted unanimously. The third resolution on 'Postwar Unemployment' was moved from the chair and accepted by all.

Large number of trade unionists including Comrades Shibnath Banerji, Jahar Ganguly, A.M. Malik, Manibishnu Choudhury, Ms Ismail and others were also present in the meeting.

The meeting terminated late at night amidst great enthusiasm and shouts of "Workers of the World, Unite!" and "TU Congress Zindabad".

2. Kerala Regional TUC Resolution Supporting Pappinisseri (Malabar) Strikers

Draft report dated 2 May 1946 of a meeting of the Kerala Regional Trade Union Committee held on 28 April 1946 at Calicut. File No. 117, All India Trade Union Congress Papers (1946); Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

The first meeting of the KRTUC since its second Annual Conference held at Ernakulam on 23rd and 24th Feb. 1946 was held in the premises of the KRTUC office in Calicut with Com K.P. Gopalan, the president, in the chair. Com N.C. Sekhar, the General Secretary, submitted this interim report of activities and statement of accounts and also reported to the council what had transpired in the Nagpur General Council of the AITUC.

Resolutions condemning the repressive policy of the Madras Government and the Government of Ceylon and Travancore against the Trade Union movements in their respective administrative areas, of greetings to various sections of workers on struggle for getting their economic and social demands realised were adopted. Another resolution was adopted appealing to all affiliate and Associate unions and the general workers in Kerala to organise huge mass rallies on 7th May to demand the reinstatement of workers of the Aaron Spinning Mills, Pappinisseri, on strike for the last 70 days, to strongly protest the callous attitude of the Mill management and repression of police on behalf of the Mill management. Police and goonda terror was let [let] loose in Pappinisseri with a view to force workers back into the mill against their will.

Resolution demanding restoration of ration cut and several other resolutions on immediate demands of workers were adopted.

May Day

Calicut witnessed a mammoth rally and meeting of the workers and public on May Day this year. The workers and public displayed unprecedented spirit and enthusiasm while they demonstrated in the streets. Comrade N.C. Sekhar, K. Damodharan and Com K.A. Koraleeyan addressed the rally. The gathering adopted the official resolutions of the AITUC along with other resolutions which demanded the immediate cancellation of the order of experiment served on Com Krishna Pillai, vice-president of MPTUC [Madras Provincial Trade Union Congress] and condemning the repressive policy of the Government against the workers on strike in Pappinisseri, Madura and Spencer in Madras. The meeting terminated with an exhortation of Com K.P. Kumaran, Calicut TU leader to help the workers on strike and thus save their freedom movement from the planned attack of the reactionary vested interests.

N.C. Sekhar.
2/5/46.

3. May Day in Gauhati, Assam

A copy of the resolutions adopted by the Gauhati Branch, Bengal and Assam Railroad Workers' Union, forwarded to the General Secretary, All India Trade Union Congress, Bombay; Gauhati, 2 May 1946. File No. 46; All India Trade Union Congress Papers (1946); Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

Resolutions

1. *Faith in a Socialist State*: This meeting reiterates its unshakable faith in a Socialist State, which alone, in its opinion can ensure real material well-being of the people by utilising fully all the resources of the country solely for the purpose of equitable distribution among people and for the benefit of the community. This meeting hopes that the constitution making machinery which may be established to frame the constitution for a Free India will base the new constitution upon the basic principle of this resolution.

2. *Social Security*: This meeting urges on the Govt of India and Provincial Govts. the necessity of taking all possible steps as a part of postwar scheme to ensure social security to labour specially by making adequate provisions to the distress that is being caused by the disabilities of Low Wages, Sickness, Unemployment, and old age. This meeting calls upon the workers engaged in all trades, industries and occupations to carry on a persistent and united agitation for the purpose of securing above, by sound organisation and appropriate Trade Union actions.

3. *Postwar Unemployment*: This meeting strongly emphasises the need for immediate action on the part of India Govt and Prov. Govts for the purpose of adequately checking the increasing rate of unemployment which, if not effectively and immediately checked will cause great distress and untold sufferings to the Working Class. Provision against the evils of unemployment can be and should be made both by increasing the total volume of employment by various methods as also by distributing the available volume of employment equitably, especially by the methods of reducing the working hours of all categories of workmen to 40 per week.

Illegible.
Secretary, Gauhati-Branch,
BA Railroad Workers' Union.

4. May Day Demonstration Against Food Shortages in Dhotarkheda, Bombay

Handwritten press communique by the Secretary, Girni Mazdoor Sangh, Taluka Kisan Sabha, Ellichpur; Ellichpur, 2 May 1946. File No. 99; All India Trade Union Congress Papers (1946); Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

8000 March to SDO's Court May Day Celebrations

As was resolved in the first session of the Taluka Kisan Conference at Dhotarkheda, 5000 Kisans from adjoining villages including hill men of Melghat Ellichpur Trade Union Workers in the joint march of 8000 strong to SDO's court to demand the proper distribution of essential commodities to demand the immediate import of jwar in deficit area.

Workers on Strike

Textile workers of Ellichpur went on strike on the refusal of the Govt and the Management to declare holiday on the first of May. The City and Camp Sweepers, the Handloom Weavers stopped their tools and joined the march. The march presented the picture of symbolic unity of all parties when all the flags—The Tricolour, The Red and League flag[s]—were seen on the forefront. The slogans "Down with Imperialism", "Kisan Mazdoor Unity Zindabad" and the slogans of their demands were echoed from street to street of the city when the march paraded despite the hot sun.

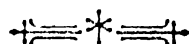
Peoples' Voice Heard (heard)

When the march reached to the office, the EAC called about 20 representatives and their leader Com Sudam Deshmukh in his office and after heated discussion he had to assure them that maximum could [would] be done by him to ease difficulties in no time.

Mammoth [Mammoth] Meeting in City

About 10,000 attended the mammoth meeting in Choudhary maidan from 8 to 11.30 in night when Com Sudam Deshmukh was in [the] chair. Numerous trade union workers and kisan workers spoke emphatically on their respective demands. Mr D.V. Pant of Amraoti congratulated the workers and kisans on their singular and exemplary success in this joint action in which all sections of the masses—Hindoos, Muslims, Untouchables—participated under their Red flag at the time when disunity is the order of the day throughout the country. His applause was greeted with long cheers of "Kisans Mazdoor Unity Zindabad". In his main speech the president Comrade explained the significance of the 'International May Day' and outlined the present political situation. Referring [Referring] to famine condition in the Taluq he urged the united action of all parties and requested all to stand as one man against the common danger—famine.

Shanker Kulkarni.
for Secy. Girni Mazdoor Sangh,
Kisan Sabha, Ellichpur.



5. AITUC Solidarity Action with Government Press Strikers

Letter by Mrinal Kanti Bose, President, to Manek Gandhi, Assistant Secretary, All India Trade Union Congress; Calcutta, 4 May 1946. File No. 9; All India Trade Union Congress Papers (1946); Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

Calcutta,
4th May 1946.

My dear Manek,

I have not heard from you since we parted at Nagpur. I am writing to ask you to take immediate action in cooperation with the Press Workers Unions in Bombay to stop the printing of the Govt of India Press at Calcutta and Aligarh. The workers of these presses have been on strike for over a month. We are informed that the Govt's work is being done in some of the private presses in Bombay. Please consider this letter as telegram and stop the work immediately. The names of the press unions of Bombay affiliated to the AITUC are given below:

1. Lal Batta Press Kamgar Union,
2. Paper Workers' Union,
3. Press and Printing Kamgar Union.

I do not remember if other unions have been affiliated. You should be in a position to know.

Have you gone through the manuscript I left with you re: History of the AITUC? I have paid a typist who had typed the pages for Rs 15. A sum of Rs 50 will have to be paid to my assistant who did the preliminary drafting after going through the reports. The manuscript will have to be revised, modified and developed if necessary. Ask Mr Joshi [N.M. Joshi, General Secretary, All India Trade Union Congress] to go through it.

Have you heard anything from the Govt of India re: Delegation to the ILO? How is Shanta? Please ask her to write to me. Inform me by telegram what action you have taken in regard to the working of the Govt of India Press.

Yours fraternally,
M.K. Bose.

P.S. How is Mr Joshi and where is he?

I am astonished to see in the current April number of the *Trade Union Record* (page 86) that about two hundred workers of the Government of India Press have struck work. It should be *two thousand*. Please make this correction in the next issue. Enclosed you will find some cuttings for being utilised in the *Record*.

6. All India Railwaymen's Federation's Unanimous Decision to Strike

News report, 'Railwaymen decide to strike'. *Free Press Journal*, 6 May 1946.

Bombay, Sunday. Amidst scenes of tumultuous enthusiasm, the General Council of the All India Railwaymen's Federation, assembled in solemn conclave at the Anjuman Islamia Hall, Bombay, unanimously passed a resolution condemning the attitude of the Government in not conceding the moderate demands of the Federation and called upon its component unions to

serve notice on their respective administrations of June 1, 1946 for strike to be declared at 12 midnight, June 27, 1946.

In putting forward the resolution, the Council maintained that the adjudication board which had been appointed by the Government was merely meant to sidetrack the real issues which were not all taken into consideration. The demands put forward by the Federation were: No retrenchment; a general revision of scales of pay; adequate dearness allowance as per recommendations of the Rao Committee and three months' pay as bonus....

The Council was fully conscious of the gravity of the situation created by the refusal of the government to concede the just demands of the workers in spite of prolonged negotiations and discussions, but in the circumstances felt in their duty to call for a general strike with effect from June 27. Therefore while congratulating the unions which have already completed the strike ballot successfully, the Council called upon the remaining unions to complete their strike ballots by June 1, 1946 and serve notices simultaneously on their respective administrations on the date.

In order that the strike may be carried on to a victorious conclusion the Council has also resolved to appoint an inner Council of Action, whose duty will be to co-ordinate all work in general, and in particular to collect strike funds, organise a volunteer corps, initiate a membership drive, elect a strike committee and form a joint committee wherever there are more than one union on a single railway. It shall also appoint regional committees in each area.

The following members have been elected to the Council of Action: R.A. Khedgikar (GIP), Shivnath Bannerji, MLA (EIR), D.S. Vaidya (GIP), Kalyan Sunderam (SIR), G.H. Kale (GIP), Humayun Kabir (B&AR), Jyoti Basu (B&AR), Mirza Ibrahim (NWR), Abdul Razak (GIP), Rajani Mukherji (M&DH), A.M. Williams (EIR), Shive Prasad (BBCI), Dr J.N. Mukerjee, M.A. Khan (NWR), and Guruswami (MSM), the last being the Secretary of the Federation.

It was decided that the quorum of the Committee of Action shall be seven.

Call to Public

By the same resolution, the Council appealed to all parties in the country for sympathetic understanding and intervention and asked them to bring their united pressure to bear on the Government to concede the minimum demands of the railwaymen to avoid needless suffering.

The meeting was held today at 12 am in the Anjuman Islamia Hall, with Mr R.A. Khedgikar in the chair. The proceedings were again not open to the press, but it is learnt that there was no difference of opinion expressed as regards the necessity for the strike.

Opinion was unanimous on this point, but it is understood that Mr Kale, one of the delegates, put forward a suggestion that in case a strike was called, permission to run food trains should be given. The suggestion was turned down.

It is also learnt while discussing the names of persons to be included in the Council of Action, the name of Dewan Chamanlal was suggested, but had to be dropped as he was known to be against strike action. An amendment seeking to include one representative from every one of the 24 affiliated unions on the Council of Action was dropped as it was known to be against strike action. An amendment seeking to include one representative from every one of the 24 affiliated unions on the Council of Action was dropped as it was pointed out that twenty-four was too bulky a figure.

The Free Press Correspondent learns that the Federation will reconsider its decision if in the meantime an interim government is established which will promise to take up the issues raised by the Federation.

7. Madras Industries and Labour Minister Against Indiscriminate Strikes

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Madras Provinces for the first half of May 1946. File No. 18/5/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Labour

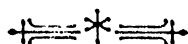
There was considerable industrial unrest and a wave of strikes. In the first place, the railwaymen held strike ballots which revealed an overwhelming majority in favour of strike. The District Magistrate of Coimbatore reports sporadic strikes in a number of industrial concerns. At Cocanada, the Oiga Workers led by Communists demanded higher wages and have been on strike since the 7th May. A thousand workers in the Rice and Oil Mills at Guntur are on strike since 29th April. The strike appears to be illegal as no proper notice of it was given either to the employers or to the Commissioner of Labour. The Beedi workers at Kurnool struck work demanding 1-4-0 per thousand beedies as against Rs 0-12-0 now being paid. The District Magistrate is attempting conciliation. There was trouble in the Salem Magnesite Syndicate when 202 workers of the Western Quarry [Quarry] were asked to go to work in a different spot and refused to do so.

The majority of the workers in the City Hotels absented themselves from work on 1st May 1946 to attend the second annual conference of the workers, the proprietors having refused a holiday. As a consequence, about 200 workers belonging to five hotels were not taken back to duty the next day. The Hotel Workers Union is now threatening a general strike unless these persons are reinstated. Strikes have been threatened by the menials of the Calicut Municipality and by the Workers' Union of the West Coast Electricity Supply Corporation. The bus workers of Nellore district have given a notice to the bus companies threatening to go on strike from 1st June 1946, unless their demands for increase of basic pay, for sick leave and for free passes are conceded.

The strike of Jute Mills Workers at Chitivalasa referred to in my previous report has since been called off. The strikes at Messrs Spencer and Co Ltd, Madras, and at the Madukarai Cement Works at Coimbatore have since been referred to adjudication. The bus workers strike at Madura has also been referred to adjudication.

The most serious strike which commenced on the last day of the fortnight was that of the port workers at Vizagapatam. Ninety per cent of the workers have gone on strike in spite of appeals to them issued by the District Magistrate and by the Madras Government.

In an important statement on May 11, 1946 the Hon'ble Mr V.V. Giri, Minister for Industries and Labour, advised workers against indiscriminate resort to the weapon of strike. He advised both workers' organisations and those of the employers to exploit every resource in their power to secure an internal settlement of disputes. He appealed for a spirit of discipline among the workers and also for a recognition on the part of employers that workers were not 'slaves' of the industrial system but a 'free men'.



8. Government and Employers Intervene to Placate Striking Workers in Bengal

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Bengal for the first half of May 1946. File No. 18/546; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Labour

17. During the fortnight the strike at the Narayanganj Cotton Mills, which had lasted for nearly 2½ months, was settled on 3rd March, 1946, following the intervention of the Hon'ble Minister, Labour. The National Tobacco Company's strike which began on 25 March, 1946, and which involved some 4000 workers also ended this fortnight as also the strike of the Auxiliary Fire Service workers in Calcutta referred to in the last Report. A nasty incident at the Port Engineering Works, Howarah, early in the month when the Manager, two European assistants and two Bengali assistants were assaulted, considerable damage was done to the furniture and stationery of the office, and papers were set on fire. The workers appear to be to be blamed for the incident and they have been locked out for an indefinite period by the company.

18. The Indian Jute Mills' Association has recently granted a 15 per cent increases in wages, and the members of the CPI have seized on the occasion to carry on propaganda to the effect that this increase has been due to their efforts and are at the same time accusing the Congress labour leaders of not supporting their demands for additional concessions.

19. As a result of Muslim League propaganda, Muslim workers, of a few jute mills and engineering concerns did not come out to work of May the 10th, "Pelastine Day", and some Hindu workers also absented themselves apprehending a communal clash.

20. Efforts are being made by the Communist Party at Khargpur to enlist support for the strike movement of the All-India Railwaymen's Federation. Their action, however, has not gone without challenge and other interests have been requesting the workers not to take direct action but to carry on in an orderly and constitutional manner.

9. UP to Extend Scope of Weekly Holidays Act, 1942

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for the United Provinces for the first half of May, 1946. File No. 18/546; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Industrial

Labour is becoming increasingly restless, thanks in no small measure to the machinations of Communists. On May 3, workers of the Harness and Saddlery Factory in Cawnpore staged a stay-in-strike which involved some 500 men. On the intervention of local Congress and Communist leaders they resumed work of May 6 and gave a formal strike notice which will expire on May 22. An attempt to open the spinning section of the Ramchandra Cotton Mills at Hathras, the workers of which have been on strike since April 17, was prevented by some of the workers on May 3. Employees of the Indian Distillery, Cawnpore went on strike without notice on April 29, for a bonus of 25 per cent, and, although it has been made clear that the firm cannot give a decision until their accounts for the year ending March 31, have been made up, the strike continues. A similar demand for bonus made by the 100 employees of Spencer and Co of Cawnpore will, if persisted in, probably result in the firm closing down altogether.

On May 14, most of the workers at the Central Ordnance Depot, Allahabad, struck, 14,000 being affected according to the press report. On the same day some 1700 workers of the JK Cotton Mills, Cawnpore, went on strike without notice, because workers in one section of the mills were asked to work in another section when the machinery in their own section broke down. The strike in the G/I [Government of India] Forms Press at Aligarh continues despite the efforts of members of the assembly to settle it. Railway employees at Jhansi, Tundla and Lucknow have all declared in favour of a general strike, the vote at Jhansi being almost unanimous. Other Government servants are also restive.

Government have decided to extend the Weekly Holidays Act of 1942 to employees of shops, restaurants and cinemas.

10. Railway Services Dislocated in the Punjab

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for the Punjab for the first half of May 1946. File No. 18/5/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Political

A four-hour sit-down strike took place on the NW Railway on May 1st, organised by the small group of Communist operating from outside the recognised railway union. Although unsuccessful in most outlying parts of the railway line, the strike agitators succeeded in causing a fairly complete stoppage in the Moghalpura workshops and in dislocating railway business at the Lahore bottleneck. On some parts of the line active sympathy with the strikes was shown by Assistant Station Masters. Police precautions backed by internal security troops standing by enabled loyal workers to keep most of the trains running, but a cautious estimate based on the experience of this unlawful preliminary strike is that it would be difficult to prevent a determined and well-organised railway strike from paralyzing the whole system.

11. Bihar Railwaymen Vote for General Strike

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Bihar for the first half of May 1946. File No. 18/5/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Labour

The Tinsplate strike, which as mentioned in the last report, was referred to adjudication, was called on the 20th instant and work was resumed on the 30th. Professor Bari is still increasing his hold over the Labour Unions in Jamshedpur and it is thought that he is planning to call strikes in the subsidiary companies of Tatas one after the other. The Union which he leads has already issued a strike notice for the Tatanagar Foundry and the next is likely to be the Cable Company. The question of appointing an adjudicator for these two threatened strikes, without waiting for them to materialise, is under consideration.

The strike of the Gaya Cotton and Jute Mills has ended and the matter has been referred to arbitration. On the 30th April the labour of the Bata Shoe Factory, Dinapore, went on strike over the suspension of few employees, but work was resumed on the 6th May on the intervention of the Hon'ble Mr Anugrah Narayan Sinha.

The general uneasiness still continues and the Staff Union of Rothas Industries Ltd have also threatened a strike. Strike threatened in the Khelari Cement Factory of Ranchi and by the Mica Workers in Koderma have been averted, at any rate, for the time being. In Jamalpur 11,000 out of 16,000 labourers of the East Indian Railway workshops are said to have cast their votes in favour of a strike, the rest being against it. In Sonepur on the O.T. Railway, meetings of disgruntled railwaymen are reported.

12. May Day Unrest on Sind Railway

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Sind for the first half of May 1946. File No. 18/5/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Labour

The principal feature of May Day was a four-hour token strike from 7 a.m. to 11 a.m. by employees of the North-Western Railway. The centres affected were the sheds at Rohri and Korti. There was also a strike at Sukkur and all along the line the running of trains was delayed. There have been strikes or threats of strikes among Press Workers. There are by way of a sample from the newly formed Karachi Printing Press Workers Union. But on the whole, May Day was a very peaceful affair and the situation should not give serious cause for alarm, apart, from the Railway.

13. Police Open Fire on Blackshirts of Madurai, Tamil Nadu

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Madras province for the first half of May 1946. Fortnightly Reports; *Public* (General) Department, Government of Madras (1946); Tamil Nadu State Archives.

Law and Order

The fortnight witnessed the outbreak of lawlessness at Madura on two occasions. On the 7th May, 1946, a hartal was called in memory of the late Mr Bhulabai Desai. The workers demanded the closure of mills and ultimately all mills were closed. Before this, however, a train bringing workers was stopped at the Meenakshi Mill level-crossing and there was considerable stone throwing. On the 12th May, 1946, there were disturbances on a larger scale. Members of the Darvida Kazhagam known from their dress as 'Black Shirts' were holding a conference in the Gaigar river bed. It is alleged that some of the Black Shirts insulted some women worshipping at the Sri Meenakshi Temple. They [Blackshirts] were assaulted at several places in the City and a large mob estimated at several thousand stormed the conference pandal. Continuous stone throwing led to the opening of fire by the police, killing one and injuring another. Although the Black Shirts were withdrawn from the conference, the crowd did not disperse. They [the crowd] succeeded in setting fire to the pandal. When the police were withdrawing, the stone throwing continued and the District Superintendent of Police and the Deputy Inspector-General of Police were among the several persons injured. The police opened fire a third time, killing one. The District Magistrate passed an order under section 144 CrPC and also imposed a curfew on the night of 12th May 1946. The situation since then has been quiet.

14. Strikes Hamper South Indian Railway

News report, 'Madras railway strike spreads'. *Free Press Journal*, 21 May 1946.

Madras, May 20. The strike situation in the South Indian Railway has deteriorated, since this morning and spread to Madura, Dhanushkodi, Quilon, certain small stations on the metre gauge section south of Trichinopoly and to important junction stations on the board gauge.

A communique issued by the General Manager from Trichinopoly at 12 noon today says: "The strike by certain sections of the inferior staff of the South Indian Railway continues. Up to 7 a.m. this morning, trains were running as usual, main line trains being about an hour late. From seven o'clock the situation has deteriorated in that, similar staff have stuck work at Madura, Dhanushkodi, Quilon and certain small stations on the metre gauge, south of Trichinopoly junction. At some station on the metre gauge there has been return to work, by certain of the strikers.

On the broad gauge, the same grades of staff at most junction stations have struck so that the position on the broad gauge is now similar to that on the metre gauge. This is apparently in accordance with the policy of the Labour Union to force an all-out strike for 24 hours from 7 a.m. this morning. The position in Golden Rock remains the same. Every endeavour will be made to maintain the services giving priority to the movement of essential foodstuffs."

The situation in Egmore (Madras), the terminus of the South Indian Railway, is reported to be quite normal, and according to the District Traffic Superintendent at Egmore, the Traffic Department and Signal Section here are not affected by the strike.

The suburban electric train service is kept up to schedule, though most of the through trains due in Madras this morning, arrived somewhat late—by 15 to 50 minutes. Police guards have been posted as a precautionary measure at the level crossing gates and the line to the suburban section is being patrolled. This is said to be purely to prevent attempts at intimidating the workers.

The strike in this section, it is understood, has affected only about 60 per cent of the workers in the Loco and Engineering departments.

15. Guntur (Andhra Pradesh) Cart Pullers

Confront Police and Employers

Extracts from a news report, 'Guntur strikers bare chests before police bullets.' *People Age*, 25 May 1946.

May 11, 1946. May 4th, the sixth day of the Guntur draw-cart pullers' strike was a day of working-class heroism, which will always be proudly remembered in Andhra.

The draw-cart pullers had been forced to go on strike by the refusal of the merchants whose goods they carry, to give them a living wage.

The merchants' leader is one Maddi Sudarsanam. He made piles of money during the war, among other things, by acting as an agent for a British firm Louis Dreyfus and Company,—which exploits our country by trading in groundnuts.

How Sudarsanam secured this agency is not known. But he is certainly notorious for his kowtowing to the officials and contributions to war funds.

Despite all this, Sudarsanam has this year been elected an MLC on the Congress ticket....

On May 3, Rao Bahadur T. Jalaiah, an influential business magnate, urgently required the help of the workers to cart oil-tins to lorries for export....

... After one lorry had been taken away, they began to picket and prevent more lorries from being loaded. Immediately the police was called in, but the workers continued to picket successfully all day....

The merchants, probably for the first time in their lives, themselves loaded the first lorry, while the police kept guard. The workers began to picket the second lorry. Subbarayudu [Assistant Superintendent of Police Rao Bahadur B. Subbarayudu] and an Inspector of Police pulled out their revolvers and aimed at the workers.

But this is 1946—people are no longer afraid of bullets. Two fearless workers sprang forward. Their names were Shree Tamulu and Seshalah. They bared their chest and cried out: “Shoot—shoot if you dare—but you shall not take away the oil tins.”

Behind them their comrades cheered again and yet again. Even the great ASP [Assistant Superintendent of Police] Subbarayadu ... was unnerved, and he slowly pocketed his revolver.

The merchant gang turned pale, bewildered.

The police constables, for all their fear of their bosses, could not suppress their pride in the workers' courage. “Shabbash! Bravo!” they cried out their voices filled with emotion....

16. Bata Shoe Workers Take Over Batanagar Factory

Extracts from a report, ‘Bengal Bata shoe workers rise up against white Czech maliks’. The parenthesised comments preceding the article are by the editor of *People's Age*, 26 May 1946.

(In Bata's homeland—Czechoslovakia—the workers have nationalised their giant factories and sent the owners packing. So the Batas have run to India, and in Province after Province, Batapurs and Batanagars are rising.

Here the Czech sahibs are busy with the same methods of exploitation, of which their fellow-countrymen have rid themselves. They reckoned that in slave India, they could get away with what was no longer tolerated in free Czechoslovakia. But they reckoned wrong.

We publish below the stories of two strikes in two Bata factories in Bengal and the Punjab. These stories reveal that the Indian working-class is also preparing like its Czech brothers, to give the Batas the marching orders.—Editor.)

Seven thousand four hundred workers, supervisors and officers of Batanagar have been on strike since April 18th. Their demands are:

- 1) Recognition of the Union.
- 2) Permanent service.
- 3) Three months' wage as Victory bonus.
- 4) Three months' wages as annual production bonus.
- 5) One month's privilege leave, 14 days' sick and 14 days' casual leave with full pay.
- 6) Improvement of living quarters.
- 7) Free medical aid.
- 8) Dearness allowance, etc.

Supporting the workers are 41 officers and supervisors drawing salaries from Rs 300 to 1000 who refused to be the Management's *dalals*, by breaking the workers' unity. All the 41

joined the workers' Union thus defeating the Management's efforts to form a rival union, with the help of superior staff.

The factory has come to complete standstill. Not a single *dadal* is to be found.

Four hundred worker-volunteers guard day and night all possible approaches to the factory. The whole Batanagar, its entire life, is controlled by the Union. No persons is allowed to enter or leave without the Union's gatepass....

17. Kanpur in Grip of Strikes

News reports, 'Cawnpore in the grip of strikes'. *Free Press Journal*, 31 May 1946.

Cawnpore, May 30. Cawnpore is in the grip of labour unrest. Workers in some mills and factories, including Government owned, are already on strike and in some cases notices of strike have been given.

The strike in the Government Harness and Saddlery Factory involving nearly 8000 men has entered its eighth day. Picketing and regular meeting of the workers are being held at Queen's Park where an office of the strike committee has been opened to supervise the situation.

A Labour Enquiry Committee consisting of Pandit Balkrishna Sharma, MLA (Central), Mr Ganga Sahai Chaubey, MLA, Maulana Hasrat Mohani, MLA, and Mr S. Yusuf, with Professor Shibban Lal Saxena as its Chairman, has been formed to look into the grievances of the employees of the factory.

The workers of the local Central Ordnance Depot, about 11,000 in number, have given a fortnight's notice of their intention to strike if their demands for bonus and enhancement of dear food allowance are not met.

18. Workers in Militant Mood in Madras Province

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Madras Province for the first half of May 1946.
Fortnightly Reports; Public (General) Department, Government of Madras (1946);
Tamil Nadu State Archives.

Labour

In common with other provinces, the railwaymen in this Provinces are making preparations for the threatened All India Railway strike. Collections for the strike fund are going on. Meanwhile the fortnight witnessed a fairly extensive strike on several lines of the South Indian Railway. On 14-5-1946 consequent [to] the disciplinary action taken by the management against a few workers in the Golden Rock Workshop of the South Indian Railway at Trichy, the workers in the Wagon Shop and the Paint Shop staged a stay-in-strike which continued till the 22nd. This coincided with the strike of the menials in some stations. This was started at Villupuram when the Secretary of the Union was refused leave and in spite of the refusal took leave. The strike of the menials spread rapidly to several other areas. It was however of a brief duration. The strike was generally peaceful but at Madura, the strikers besieged the District Mechanical Engineer's Office and smashed the windows and threw stones; they also held up a train outside Madura station, severely mauled the driver and fireman and attempted to put the engine out of action. At Basagara in Malabar district some Communists tried to obstruct the passage of trains by lying on the line and it required a party of armed police to persuade them to remove themselves. The strike started on 14th May and spread surprisingly on 18th and 19th.... Owing

to the absence of pointsmen and gatemen, etc., trains ran late and public suffered a lot of inconvenience.

The strike of the Port workers at Vizagapatam continues. It is a hundred per cent strike, but the strikers have so far behaved very peacefully. A number of Chittagonians have been brought in from outside and the military authorities have also moved as Inland Water Transport Company who are working the cranes and carrying out other essential work in the Port. So far neither side shows any sign of giving in on the question of retrenchment which is the really outstanding question on which the strike began.

About 3000 hotel workers employed in the hotels of the Madras City struck work on the morning of 23-5-1946 as a protest against the refusal of the hotel proprietors to reemploy 150 workers who were dismissed for absence on 1-5-1946. Batches of strikers entered some hotels, obtained refreshments without making payment and created disturbance. The dispute has since been referred to a Board of Conciliation. The dispute between the workers and management of the Aaron Mills in Malabar has also been referred to a Board of Conciliation.

There were a large number of other minor strikes in several places in the province, some of them brief and some still continuing. In several towns scavengers have struck or threatened to strike of obtain arrears of dearness allowance, like Government servants, from 1-7-1944 to 31-12-1944. The matter is under consideration.

19. Bengal Government Partially Successful in Containing Strikes

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Bengal for the second half of May 1946. File No. 18/5/1946; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Labour

23. The workers of the Bata Shoe company resumed work after six weeks' strike on the 23rd as a result of negotiations presided over by the Hon'ble Minister in charge of labour.

24. The apprehended strike of the employees of the Howrah Municipality began on the 16th but on the third day the strikers returned to work after the municipal authorities had agreed to concede their main demand for an increment in wages: the Commissioner takes the view that the demand is definitely unreasonable and almost beyond the ability of the municipal commissioners to meet.

25. The stoppage of work at the Port Engineering Works referred to in the last Report continues.

26. Workers of the Prem Chand Jute Mills, Kesoram Cotton Mill and the Bengal Immunity went on strike following demands for an increase in wages and as a protest against the dismissal of workers: the cotton mill strike had ended as a result of negotiations but the strike in the two other organisations still continues.

27. Trouble is feared in the National Iron and Steel Works at Belur in Howrah and an order under Section 144, Criminal Procedure Code, has had to be issued. The situation in Burnpur, Burdwan, continues to give cause for uneasiness though it is not yet certain whether there will be a strike.

The Congress Labour MLA's are trying to oust the Communists from the Howrah and Barrackpore industrial areas and with this end in view a centralised union, largely formed the engineering concerns, is being formed in Howrah.

29. In the jute mill area the Communists are holding meetings of jute workers to popularise the demand for a basic wage of Rs 40 and dearness allowance according to the cost of living. The Communists have also been active in the different tea garden areas and have succeeded in stopping work on two tea estates in Darjeeling, and have stirred up trouble on two tea estates in Chittangong.

20. Shrinking of the Indian Postwar Economy Blamed for Worker Unrest

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for the United Provinces for the second half of May 1946. File No. 18/5/1946; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Industrial

The Labour situation has deteriorated and the Province in general and Lucknow, Cawnpore and Allahabad in particular are suffering from a wave of strikes and threats of further strikes. Retrenchment on account of the stoppage of war orders and tendency to reduce, or discontinue, the payment of bonus are to a great extent responsible for this unrest, but there is a little doubt that an important factor is agitation and incitement on the part of Communists and others whose aim is to embarrass Government. During the fortnight ending May 15 there were seven strikes, of which five were without notice. In the five is included the strike of some hundred men employed by Messrs Spencer and Co, Cawnpore, which was mentioned in my last letter and in respect of which the notice (which the Labour Commissioner has held to be improper) contained the names of persons who were dead. A strike in the RG Cotton Mills, Lucknow, commenced on May 11, following the services of discharge notices on six workers. The General Secretary of the Textile Labour Union, which had asked the management to meet the strikers' demands for an increase in pay and dearness allowance and the grant of bonus, has taken no action on the Labour Commissioner's suggestion that the strike be called off. Meanwhile, other Unions are being pressed to organise a general strike and otherwise to support the Cotton Mill operatives and the strike still continues. In Lucknow also some 250 workers of the Carriage and Wagon Workshop went on strike on May 17, and general strikes of transport workers and of Military Accounts clerks are threatened. In Cawnpore the strike in the JK Cotton Manufacture Ltd, on May 13, referred to in my last letter, came to an end on May 24, but on May 15 some 450 workers of the JK Woollen Mills, Cawnpore, went on a sudden strike demanding bonus and higher wages. (The strike also terminated on May 24 on the workers agreeing to give proper notice). On May 23, there was a complete strike involving some 8000 workers in the Harness and Saddlery Factory which still continues. Some 7000 workers of the Central Ordnance Depot have given notice of a strike.

Notice of a strike was given on April 30 by the workers of the Indian Press, Allahabad, who went on strike on May 15. Difference have been settled by the intervention of the Labour Commissioner and the strike has been called off. A similar strike took place in the carding department of Johns Mills, Agra, who gave notice on April 18, demanding an increase of wages and went on strike on May 11.

On the other hand, the strike in the Indian Distillery, Cawnpore, which began on April 24, terminated on May 16, when both parties accepted the award of the Conciliation Officer,

while the strike and lock-out in the New Ramchandra Cotton Mills, Hathras, terminated on May 10 through the intervention of the local members of the Legislative Assembly.

Notice of strikes were received from the General Secretary, Electric Workers' Union, Allahabad (which was to expire of May 29), and from the Star Paper Mills, Saharanpur, the Lasco Chemicals, Cawnpore, the Pukka Hosiery, Cawnpore, and the Structural Steel Co., Lucknow. Steps have been taken to commence conciliation and adjudication proceedings.

Of Government of India concerns, the Government Press, Aligarh is still on strike, while a sudden strike following the dismissal of a employee, took place at the Central Ordnance Depot, Chheoki, Allahabad, on May 15 and was called off on May 20. Within a few days, however, a further strike took place and still continues, having in the meantime led to the riot described in paragraph 3.

The Government of India presumably have full information regarding the preparations for a general railway strike on July 27. On May 18 a lightning 4-hour strike from 7 a.m. to 11 a.m. took place at Ghaziabad where the strikers, assisted to some extent by passengers, succeeded in preventing all train movement in spite of all efforts to prevent them. In the incident 11 constables were injured. Communists are taking advantage of the unsettled situation and at a meeting in Cawnpore they passed a number of resolutions demanding a basic minimum wage of Rs 40, an increase of 200 per cent in all wages, a reduction in working hours and improvement of working conditions.

3.A.vi June

1. CP and Berar Government to Deal Firmly with Strikers

Extracts from a news report, 'CP measures to meet railway strike situation'. *Hindustan Times*, 8 June 1946.

Camp Pachmarhi, June 7. I authoritatively learn that the provincial Government are watching with deep concern and alertness railwaymen's activities and the threat of the impending strike.

It was revealed to me during the course of an interview with a responsible official of the CP Government that the Government would deal with the strikers with a firm hand should they attempt to disturb peace.

While hoping for an amicable settlement of the railway dispute the Government, I was told, cannot allow poor railway workers to be misled or exploited by Communists who pretend to be the well-wishers of the workers. The Government will not hesitate to take suitable and firm steps against the Communists if they attempt to exploit the situation....

2. Bombay Ministry Uses Defence of India Rules Against Strikers

Extracts from a report, 'In Bombay, Mukund Iron workers' struggle'. *People's Age*, 9 June 1946.

On June 1st, the Bombay Commissioner of Police, promulgated an order under the Defence of India Rules, prohibiting for a period of 15 days any meeting, procession or assembly of more than four persons, anywhere within a radius of half a mile round the Mukund Iron & Steel Co Ltd, Sewree.

This act crowned a series of repressive measures by the Bombay police against the 40 days old peaceful and legal strike of about 1000 workers of the factory.

Since the textile general strike of 1934, Bombay workers have not had such restrictive measures applied to crush their struggle. No, not even during the war days!....

3. Jayaprakash Narayan Blames Government and Railway Board for the Impending Strike

Extracts from a news report, 'People must stand by hard-hit railwaymen'. *Free Press Journal*, 14 June 1946

Bombay, Thursday. "If the Government fail to accept the demands of the workers or to refer them to arbitration, the railway workers are entitled to have the full sympathy of their countrymen in their heroic resolve to fight, through a general strike, for their rights," says Mr Jayaprakash Narain, Congress Socialist leader, in a statement on the threatened railway workers' strike.

Mr Jayaprakash Narain says: "If the country faces a crisis today the responsibility is entirely of the Government and the Railway Board." ...

4. The United Provinces Government Suggests a Soft Approach Towards Strikers

Extracts from Paragraphs for Monthly Summary for the Cabinet; 14 June 1946. File No. 5/12/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Security Arrangements in the Event of the Threatened Railway Strike

Provinces were asked in a telegram dated 6th June whether security arrangements and law and order provisions were as far as possible satisfactory should the threatened Railway strike take place on 27th June. Provincial Governments were asked to intimate (i) whether the assistance of the Government of India were required in the matter of coordination between Provinces or with Railway Administration or the Armed Forces or in any other way, and (ii) whether they consider any special legislation necessary.

2. The UP Government's reply indicated that effective picketing is to be expected and that their police measures would be sufficient to protect life and property only if picketers were not dispersed. Any attempt by the police to break the strike by dispersing picketers would lead to clashes and in the present state of public opinion sympathetic strikes would occur and there would be real danger of general sabotage of Railway track and property and communal disturbances. Any attempt to run attenuated services by loyal workers would involve the ultimate use of a military force on a considerable scale. In the present circumstances and with public sympathy not against the strikers the Provincial Government advise deferring the strike by referring to dispute to adjudication. If the strikes takes place main problem would be arrest of strike leaders and action against picketers. In order to secure uniformity in this matter the Provincial Government suggest the calling of a conference at ministerial level.

5. Threat of Rail Strike Looms Large in Bengal

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Bengal for the first half of June 1946. File No. 18/6/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Labour

There have been few strikes or lockouts during the period. The most important are the strike at the Bengal Immunity Co and the lockouts at the Port Engineering Works and the Agarpura and Fort Gloster Jute Mills. All the lockouts are the direct result of nasty incidents during which members of the management were assaulted.

The labour situation in the tea gardens generally is far from normal and there are considerable possibilities of trouble in that area.

Strike notices have been served on the railway managements by the various railway unions. Uncertainty still exists as to the final attitude of the unions. Though the unions represent only a percentage of the total number of workers employed the managements are not in a position to say how many non-union workers would be induced, for a variety of reasons, to participate in a strike should one eventuate.

Negotiations between the Union and the Company at Burnpur drag on; the Company has not yet put forward any definite suggestion for a settlement.

The Communists have continued to be active in the Chittagong district. Though the trouble in the tea gardens has subsided for the time being they are now trying to work up trouble among the employees of the Chittagong Municipality.

6. Labour in the United Provinces Divides Along Communal Lines

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for the United Provinces for the first half of June 1946. File No. 18/4/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Industrial

There has been a further deterioration in the labour situation and the extent to which labour is being exploited by Communists, Socialists and others for political ends immeasurably increases the danger to organized society of the present campaign to bring about a railway strike and possibly a general strike. In Lucknow the strike in the RG Cotton Mills continues and a lock-out was declared on June 1. In Cawnpore the strike in the Harness & Saddlery Factory continues and strikes in 13 mills were threatened to take place on June 17 and a further strike in the Central Ordnance Depot on June 20. The strikes in the mills have been referred to adjudication and attempts are being made to settle the strike in the Harness & Saddlery Factory in the hope that, if this is done, the Central Ordnance Depot strike will not take place. As in the case of the strike at the Ordnance Depot at Chheoki, mentioned in my last report, there are signs of a schism on communal lines among railwaymen and to the inevitable challenge to public order inherent in every large industrial dispute there is added the danger of communal strife should these strikes spread.

The strike in Spencer & Co factory in Cawnpore came to an end on May 30 when the management closed the factory for good. It had been running at a loss and its machinery was

worn out. Five other strikes, mentioned in my previous letter, were settled during the second half of May when the only new strike was a minor one of some 26 workers in Cawnpore.

Of the strikes in the Government of India concerns, those at the Government Press, Aligarh and the Harness & Saddlery Factory in Cawnpore continue. In the latter concern the management had declared a lock-out.

Adjudication has been ordered in respect of the strikes notices given on behalf of the Electric Workers Union Allahabad and the Star Paper Mills Saharanpur, while two other notices were withdrawn on the intervention of the Labour Commissioner.

7. Punjab Communist Spread Labour Unrest to Coincide with Railway Strike

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for the Punjab for the first half of June 1946. File No. 18/6/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Labour

Communists, who have several industrial unrests to their discredit in recent months, and whose activities are a source of increasing annoyance, are striving to create a situation in which industrial and utility service strikes will take place to coincide with the railway strike. In this respect their endeavours are believed to have met with some success. The Indian Federation of Labour dominated by Royists, is reported to be working on the same lines and is expected to advise the Central Hydro-Electric Workmen's Union and the Lahore Electric Supply Company Employees Union to observe a one day strike on June the 28th. The unrest created by the workers of these parties, who have no other means of livelihood but politics, is proving to be contagious and has affected certain of Government's lower paid servants and employees of District Boards and Municipalities.

8. Congress Mill Owner of Pappinisseri (Malabar) Confronted by Communist Workers

Extracts from a report, 'Terror over Pappinisseri'. *People's Age*, 16 June 1946.

... Samuel Aaron—Managing Director of the Aaron Mills, Pappinisseri, North Malabar, former Congress MLA—today fights 1300 workers of his mills. He does not fight clean.

What is the fight about? Go back to Feb. 26. There is a General strike on to protest against the inhuman repression that followed the RIN strike in Bombay. Aaron's 1300 workers joined the strike, for it is the cause of all Indians, the people's demonstration calling on the British to quit quick.

Talking about 'Quit India' is alright for Samuel Aaron—but demonstrating—no, never!

"Apologise or get the sack," says Aaron to 500 workers who joined the General strike.

Apologise for 'Quit India', for condemning British murder? The workers refused. It was an insult not only to them but to the whole national movement.

Aaron sacked the lot—all 500 of them.

Within two days, all 1300 workers were out of the mill, demanding the unconditional reinstatement of the 500 sacked workers.

Aaron imagined he could break the strike with the passage of time. His calculations went all wrong.

Since then the strike has continued—a hundred days—the longest in the history of Malabar....

9. Darjeeling Communist MLA'S Arrest Causes Trouble

Extracts from a report, 'Darjeeling tea planters let loose hell on labourers'. *People's Age*, 16 June 1946.

Hell has been let loose in Darjeeling's tea gardens. The crime of the workers is that they elected a Communist—Ratanlal Brahman—as their MLA.

Immediately after the elections, the bosses of nearly ten gardens filed cases against the local Communist and trade union organisers. Among the accused were Ratanlal himself, G.L. Subba (Secretary of the District Communist Party) and Hemal (Secretary of the Tea Garden Labourers' Union).

Workers are being dismissed every day from almost every garden on the slightest suspicion that they are connected with the Tea Garden Labourers' Union. During the last week of May, from Panfesering and Pushaytank gardens alone ten workers were dismissed.

The climax to the campaign of terror came on May 26 when the Tea Garden MLA Ratanlal Brahman was himself arrested.

Immediately after the arrest of the 16 workers, 500 workers of the 'Sun' Tea Garden stopped work. A huge procession of workers of many gardens paraded Darjeeling with Red flags shouting slogans against police zoolum and planters' oppression, and demanding regular rations and the withdrawal of the case against Ratanlal and others.

10. Government Considers Measures to Tackle Railway Strike

Extracts from Paragraphs for Monthly summary for the Cabinet; 18 June 1946. File No. 5/12/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Railway Strike

In continuation of Home Department circular telegram of 6th June, two telegram were sent to provinces on 14th June. The first asked them to forward, if the strike occurred, brief daily reports with special reference to the security, law and order aspects of the situation; the second informed them that the Government of India were advised that the strike would be illegal, but that they had decided that there should be no arrests before the strike took place, and that thereafter charges should be laid only in respect of action taken after the strike began such as inciting men not on strike to come out, encouraging strikers to remain on strike and intimidating those who wished to work.

Madras, Bombay, Ajmer, Baluchistan and Delhi have not yet replied to the telegram of 6th June. The replies received from other provinces indicate that they are satisfied with the security and law and order provisions and do not wish for Central intervention to coordinate schemes or to supplement existing emergency legislation.

2. With reference to the suggestion made by the United Provinces Government to hold a Conference at Ministerial level (vide last week's summary), in consultation with War Department, War Transport Department and Railway Department it is considered that a Conference of

Provincial representatives at Ministerial level would not at present be of much use and that if any meeting were held at all, it would be more appropriate at Secretaries' level.

11. Hartal and Riots in Madurai Following Jawaharlal Nehru's Arrest in Kashmir

Report by the District Superintendent of Police, Madura North, to the Inspector General of Police, Madras; Madura North, 22 June 1946. File No. 2012; Public (General) Department, Government of Madras (1946); Tamil Nadu State Archives.

On 20-6-1946, the Town Congress Committee declared a hartal for 21-6-1946 because of Jawaharlal Nehru's arrest in Kashmir. That evening they tried to put it off till the 22nd and published a note to this effect in the *Thanthi* of the 21st, but were not successful. Hooligans and urchins went round enforcing the hartal. At 7.30 a.m. a crowd gathered at the Meenakshi Mills level crossing and tried to stop the Harveypatty Special from bringing the Madura Mills workers to Madura. The DIG, SR [Deputy Inspector General of Police, Southern Range], went there with a party of AR [Armed Reserves] dispersed the mob with tear gas and let the train through. There was some stone throwing, but it was not serious. AR parties were posted in Town Central, North and South stations and selected danger points and lorry patrols were sent round the town. At about 10 a.m. several stone throwings in Tailors' [Street] and West Masi Junction between Hindus and Muslims was reported. This was the result of attempts by Hindus to close a Muslim cycle shop. The Deputy Inspector-General of Police, S.R. took a party of AR to the scene with the Additional District Magistrate and City Magistrate and found both parties had ceased throwing stones.

While there, there was information that [a] Muslim petty shop was being looted in the Town Hall Road. The Deputy Inspector-General of Police and party arrived to find the rioters had disappeared after wrecking two shops and setting fire to a cattle shed behind one.

I was out in Pachamalai Camp when the Express [letter] reached me at 8.15 a.m. I reached Madura at 11.40 a.m. and proceeded to Town North Station, where in Dy Inspector-General of Police acquainted me of all that had occurred.

In view of unrest around the Madura Mills, the Dy SP [Deputy Superintendent of Police] Madura, and the Law & Order Inspector were posted there with a party of AR and half the [tear] gas squad.

Within a few minutes of my arrival a mob was reported to be throwing stones at the Pandiyan Mills, where a section of AR had been posted. The Dy Inspector-General of Police and I proceeded to the scene and dispersed the remnants, who were still pelting stones, with tear gas.

Several isolated incidents in different parts of the town were reported, some 16 Muslim shops and in one quarter, a few Hindu shops being looted by communal mobs. There was also a clash near the Madura Mills between the loyal mill labourers and the Communists in which some Communist shops and a Reading room were wrecked before the Police brought the situation under control with tear gas under orders of the City Magistrate.

There was Mill-Communists trouble at the Madura Mills Labour Union Office which was dealt with by the City Magistrate and the Deputy Superintendent of Police.

A looting was reported in West Town street, but the looters fled on the arrival of my party except one who was arrested. Some stone throwing ensued and tear gas was used. Some arrests

were made. The Dy Inspector-General of Police then arrived on the scene and further resort had to be made to the use of tear gas. Leaving a section of AR at the scene, we proceeded to Tailors' street where Hindu-Muslim trouble was reported. A neighbouring Police party was on the scene and trouble had ceased. A few Hindu petty shops had been partly looted.

We returned to West Town Street where stones were being thrown and used tear gas and made more arrests. At about 2.45 p.m. more trouble broke out in the Mill area and the Dy Supdt of Police and Law & Order Inspector dispersed mobs in 2 areas with tear gas. Till about 4.15 p.m. the City Magistrate and I were busy in the area west of the temple and near the Dindigul Road dispersing crowds and making arrests, while mobile patrols toured the town and dealt with acts of hooliganism and looting whenever they came across, or had information of, them.

Attempts were made to block roads with large stones, dustbins and in one case, with uprooted telephone poles and a traffic sign. The police could do not more than remove them as at their distant approach, the miscreants would scatter and disappear.

At 4.15 p.m. the Dy Supdt of Police was despatched with a party to let the Harvepatti Special through the Meenakshi Mills level-crossing.

About this time, the sergeant Major and his patrol party were attacked with stones by a mob at the Junction of East Marret and Ramnad Road which [mob] they [had] surprised in the act of attacking a Muslim shop. As the crowd was large and aggressive and his party was small, he fired one round after due warning and wounded one rioter who was immediately despatched to hospital. This mob then dispersed.

By 2 p.m. an order Under Sec. 144 CrPC prohibiting the assembly of 5 or more persons was promulgated by the Sub Magistrate Madura and by 4.30 p.m. an order imposing a Curfew from 7 p.m. to 5.30 a.m. was issued by the City Magistrate.

At about 5.45 p.m. on information of trouble in the Ramnad Road area, I took a lorry party there and found a mob attempting to break into a ration shop. Two shots were fired at the looters and two were killed. The remainder dispersed and the corpses were removed to hospital.

Meanwhile trouble was encountered beyond the Meenakshi Mills level-crossing towards Pasumalai, where boulders had been placed on the line in 2 places, with attendant mobs. In the course of removing the boulders, the Police party, the Addl Dt Magistrate and the train were heavily stoned. The train was finally escorted into Madura by the Dy Supdt of Police and while the train was stopped for the second time to clear the line, some of the mills colliers in the train, who were found possible to ascertain who was responsible for the attack.

A section of AR was left at the level-crossing, but shortly after the train passed the crowd managed to remove some keys and fishplate bolts round the curve a furlong south of the level-crossing. This was discovered by a police patrol and reported to the DTS [District Traffic Superintendent] at Madura.

After dusk, a single rail was removed 3 furlongs further south. This was also discovered by a Police patrol and reported to the DTS.

A pilot train with a repair gang was escorted out by the police at 9.30 p.m. and the trains which had been held up at Madura and at Pasumalai started running again by 11 p.m.

The feature of the day's rioting was the hit-and-run tactics of the rioters. The Police could never get at grips and most of the tear gas was fired either at long-range or at crowds skulking at the intersections of the numerous lanes and streets, with which the city is riddled. The mere sight of a uniform or a lorry was enough to scatter them practically every time.

Pickets, interlinked with mobile patrols were maintained throughout the night. The curfew was a success and no incidents were reported in town after 7 p.m.

A.E. Spitteler,
Dy Supdt of Police,
Madura North.

12. Riots in Madurai Subside

Extracts from a letter by the District Magistrate, Madura, to E.M. Gawne, Chief Secretary, Public (General) Department, Government of Madras; Madura, 28 June 1946. File No. 2012; Public (General) Department, Government of Madras (1946); Tamil Nadu State Archives.

*Madura,
28th June, 1946.*

My dear Gawne,

The [riots and disturbances in Madura City] seem to be over for the present. There were two stabbing incidents on June 24th, one of which was a murder, and one stabbing incident on the 25th.

After that there has been nothing. The curfew order was lifted with effect from the night of the 26th. I was being pressed by leaders on both sides to continue it that night, but I felt it desirable in the interests of public confidence, to take the chance, which was perfectly successful. Liquor shops were ordered to be closed on the 25th and 26th as a precautionary measure. This also had a useful effect. I regret I did not this earlier. With the persuasion [persuasion] of non-officials, Magistracy and Police, a larger percentage of shops, especially in the disturbed areas, were opened from day to day from the 25th onwards and conditions in that respect are now practically at night. So far, the cinemas has been kept closed by virtue of the order under Sec. 144 CrPC, but I propose to relax this from tomorrow unless anything further untoward occurs. There is still a certain amount of tension and apprehension in respect both of the Hindu-Muslim trouble and as between the adherents of the rival labour unions. It may be hoped that this will gradually die down....

Yours sincerely,
Illegible.

13. Inter Union Communal Rivalry, and Mob Violence in Madurai

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Madras Province for the second half of June 1946. Fortnightly Reports; Public (General) Department, Government of Madras (1946); Tamil Nadu State Archives.

Law and Order

Serious disturbances broke out in Madura on the 21st June in connection with hartal for Pandit Nehru's arrest and continued on 22nd and 23rd. The disorders unfortunately took on a Hindu-Muslim aspect as some Muslims did not close their shops resulting in the shops being stoned and looted. This led to retaliation and mutual assaults and cases of stabbing. The disturbances

also had a 'labour' aspect, there being clashes between two opposing parties of the mill workers of the Madura mills, one party with allegiance to the Madura Labour Union and the other under the influence of the Communist. Attempts were made to block roads with large stones, dustbins and with uprooted telephone posts. The police at first used tear gas but the police party itself was attacked with stones and had to open fire repeatedly. The total casualties on account of police firing during the three days were four killed, 2 of wounds and 3 seriously injured. In addition 6 persons were murdered and 45 injured in the mob fighting. A number of persons have been arrested. Orders under Section 144 CrPC were passed and a curfew was also imposed. The presence of the Hon'ble Minister for Industries and Labour in the city of June 23rd helped to ease the situation. Peace Committees composed of members of both communities were formed at the instance of the Collector and were round the town to assist in the restoration of peace. By the 24th, the city returned to normal conditions.

14. Concessions to Workers Cools Unrest in Madras Province

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Madras Province for the first half of June 1946. File No. 18/6/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Labour

In conformity with the decision of the All India Railwaymen's Federation, the Railwaymen's Unions of the MSM and SIR railways withdrew the strike notices, although the latter did not do so until the very last moment, thus keeping the railway authorities and every one else in suspense. The fortnight witnessed, the peaceful settlement of at least one dispute, between the management and workers of the Aaron Mills in Malabar. This had been referred by Government to the District Judge of North Malabar for adjudication. The proceedings have been successful and the strike at the mills has come to an end.

The strike at the Buckingham and Carnatic Mills Madras City referred in the last report still continues. Government have appointed a Board of Conciliation to settle the dispute. A 'sit-down' strike involving nearly 800 employees has unfortunately taken place in the MSM Railway workshop at Perambur and is still continuing. The Railway authorities have made several attempts for peaceful settlement of the dispute the origin of which is rather obscure but so far without success. The strikers have refused to follow the advice of their Union to return to work.

A number of short-lived strikes are reported from the mill areas of Coimbatore and Tirupur. In Salem the strike in the Indian Metal and Metallurgical Corporation of Mettur continues and the factory remains closed. At the Mettur Industries Ltd, an operative whose carelessness was responsible for damage to 12,000 yards of cloth was transferred to another department as a punishment, his wages thereby being reduced by a rupee. This was the cause of a strike which rapidly embraced all the mill workers numbering about 12,100. The Commissioner of Labour intervened and the worker was taken back on his former wages and the work was resumed after a break of 8 days.

The strike of the port workers at Vizagapatam has been called off. The General Manager of the Bengal Nagpur Railway appears to have assured the labourers that concessions given to the railway men would also be conceded to the port workers. He agreed to employ those who had been retrenched during the strike and also to reemploy those who had been retrenched

before the strike as and when work was available. The strikers appear to think that all their demands have been conceded.

15. UP Congress MLA's Talk Labour Back to Work

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for the United Provinces for the second half of June 1946. File No. 18/6/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Industrial

1. With the calling off of the railway strike and the realization by labourers involved in two of the major strikes which had continued for some time in the Harness and Saddlery Factory in Cawnpore and the RG Cotton Mills in Lucknow that strikes may involve labourers themselves in hardship and loss, there has been a general improvement in the labour position. Further signs of the tendency of labour, which was reported in my last letter, to line up on communal lines and a consequent reluctance of Muslim labour to join in recent strikes or threats to strikes have been noticed.

2. On June 17 and 18 employees of four cotton and other factories in Cawnpore went on strike in defiance of adjudication orders which were served on employees and workers alike on the evening of June 16. Following intervention by local Congress MLA's. The strikes have since come to an end. A threatened strike in the COD [Central Ordnance Depot], Cawnpore, which it was feared would have created serious law and order problems, did not materialise, while the employees of the Harness and Saddlery Factory in Cawnpore resumed work on June 25—again in consequence of the intervention of Congress MLA's. The strike in the RG Cotton Mills at Lucknow has also been called off largely as a result of the efforts of local officials. Following the service of adjudication orders of June 20, a number of strikes in the Cawnpore tanneries, which were scheduled to commence on June 22, were abandoned, while a strike notice involving the employees of more than 50 printing presses in Lucknow was withdrawn as a result of intervention by the Labour Commissioner.

3. On June 12 and 15 short lighting strikes of railwaymen took place at Jhansi as a protest against the delay in the payment of dearness allowance. The postal employees, apparently encouraged by the success of their threatened strike in March and by the outcome of the threatened railway strike, are now threatening to strike with effect from July 10. Municipal sweepers in Bundelkhand continued to be restive as a result of Communist inspired propaganda. In Lucknow two strikes during the first half of June by clerks of the MTCR [?] were followed on June 17 and 18 by a strike of 2000 some of whom were arrested for obstructing traffic. This strike has also been called off. Compounders of civil hospitals in Lucknow, Jhansi and Fyzabad are talking of striking, are also the patwaris of the Ghazipur district who demand a pay of Rs 60 per mensem plus dearness allowance and have resolved to give up the talking of illegal gratifications.

4. In the result while unrest undoubtedly continues, there is at the moment no strike in Cawnpore and none of importance in the Province, and it is hoped that the comprehensive press note in which the Provincial Government has defined its labour policy, combined with the realisation by labour that in present conditions neither the public nor Government will sympathise with Communist-inspired acts which will interfere with the maintenance of essential supplies and services, will help to preserve this satisfactory state of affairs.

16. Agreement Between Punjab Railway Workers and Management Welcomed

Extracts from Fortnightly Report from the Punjab for the second half of June 1946. File No. 18/6/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Labour

The agreement which enabled the railway strike to be avoided was welcomed by the public and the press in terms which gave the Railwaymen's Federation more credit and the Railway Board and Government less than was their due. Communists on the whole were relieved when the strike threat passed, for, while they are believed to be satisfied with the progress they have made in establishing themselves as leaders of railway labour, they are not anxious for a trial of strength with Government yet. Other strikes, intended to coincide with the railway strike, were also put and plans such as that of the Punjab Subordinate Services' Federation to utilise the strike occasion for gesture and threat have had to be abandoned. While the situation is better, therefore, than it would have been had the railway strike materialised, it still remains unsatisfactory inasmuch as other strikes and disputes continue and unrest still persists among the paid employees of Government.

17. Mineworkers Remain Unsettled in Bihar

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Bihar for the second half of June 1946. File No. 18/6/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Labour

In Jamshedpur the Tatanagar Foundry dispute shows no signs of settlement, but the Deputy Commissioner reports that the workers themselves are anxious to get back to work. Strikes occurred in three of China Clay Mines in Singhbhum district where the workers demanded higher wages, apparently because they are paid at very much lower rates than similar labour in Tatas' Mines which are close by. There has also been some uneasiness in the coalfields.

The workers of the Ganga Cotton and Jute Mills struck work on the 16th June, but most of the workers are now back at work. In the interval, however, there were brawls between rival unions.

3.A.vii July

1. Proposed Amendments to Bombay Industrial Disputes Act, 1938

Letter by the Chief Secretary, Political and Services Department, Government of Bombay, to the General Secretary, Bombay Provincial Trade Union Committee, Bombay; Bombay, 6 July 1946. File No. 90; All India Trade Union Congress Papers (1946); Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

*Bombay Castle,
6th July 1946.*

Sir,

With reference to your letter dated the 29th June 1946 on the [proposed amendment of the Bombay Industrial Disputes Act, 1938], I am directed to say that the date for sending views and suggesting regarding the proposed amendment of the Bombay Industrial Disputes Act has been extended up to the 10th July 1946. It is regretted that the date cannot be extended further as suggested in your letter.

Your obedient servant,
A.F Gandhi.

for Chief Secretary to the Government of Bombay,
Political and Services Department.

2. Postmen Threaten Action for Better Terms

Extracts from an article, 'All India postal general strike from July 11 unless demands are met'. *People's Age*, 7 July 1946.

India's 1,25,000 postmen and lower-grade staff have given notice that from July 11, they will stop work. Letters will not reach their destinations nor will telegrams; not till the Government of India chooses to concede their demands.

What do these much-maligned and rarely-publicised demands amount to? They want Rs 100-10-200 as wages for clerks; Rs 20-1-25 for boy-peons, with suitable grades in between for the rest of the staff like postmen, packers, runners, etc. Then they want no retrenchment, holidays... in other Government departments, adequate leave rules, common rules regarding pay, leave, dearness allowance, etc....

3. AITUC Not Interested in Holding Anti-Franco Demonstrations

Extracts from a letter by Mrinal Kanti Bose, President, to Manek Gandhi, Assistant Secretary, All India Trade Union Congress; Bombay, 9 July 1946. File No. 9; All India Trade Union Congress Papers (1946); Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

Bombay,
9 July 1946.

My dear Manek,

Your letter dated 5th instant is just to hand. I do not think that the Franco regime in Spain is a matter of much concern to us in India or to the labour movement. The Imperialists are as bad as fascists. The General Secretary of the World Federation of Trade Unions is toeing the line of the British foreign policy. I do not think that the demonstration suggested will be anything like a success. In Bengal at least an appeal from us to hold demonstrations will fall flat. I am not therefore prepared to take the responsibility of authorising such demonstrations. If you want that the World Federation of Trade Unions should be kept in good humour you have done enough by replying in the manner you have done. Why don't you keep quiet now? ...

Yours fraternally,
M.K. Bose.

4. Jawaharlal Nehru for Government Adjudication in Postal Strike

Extracts from a news report, 'Frantic bid to keep up delivery service.' *Free Press Journal*, 12 July 1946.

Bombay, Thursday. The Postal strike which commenced at midnight yesterday has completely dislocated the delivery of mail in the city and many other centres.

Postal Department authorities are now seriously thinking of calling in the aid of the military to keep their delivery services going.

Owing to the shortage of labour—only 150 labourers were available to do the work of 3500 postmen—only six of the thirteen trainloads of mail could be taken from the station. The other seven trainloads are expected to be cleared during the night, but that too only if labour is available, a prospect which seems remote.

Most of the improvised delivery centres could not handle the work satisfactorily. Mail bags containing sorted postal articles could not be carried to these centres because of shortage of labour.

Mr Krishna Prasad, Director-General of Posts and Telegraphs, took a gloomy view of the situation at Delhi.

Mr Krishna Prasad gave the position as follows as far as official information went:

Strike is complete in Bombay and virtually complete in Delhi.

There is partial strike in Jammu, Lucknow and other big centres in UP, Coimbatore, Bangalore, Madura, Calicut, Calcutta, Cittagong and Dacca.

Things are normal in Lahore, Sialkot, Nagpur, Jaipur, Itarsi, Katni, Buldana, Saugar, Seoni and Gorakhpur.

The strike situation in Atara, Sangli, Ahmednagar, Bagalkot and Thana in the Bombay Presidency was very bad, it was learnt there tonight.

Following an interview with the General Secretary of the All India Postmen, Lower-Grade Staff and RMS Union, Pandit Nehru has urged upon the Government and the Union to accept adjudication on all matters in dispute.

While the Union is prepared for an adjudication, the General Secretary said that it would take about three days after the entire dispute is referred to adjudication, for the strike to be called off. The Strike Committee, which consists of representatives of postmen from different parts of India, had to be summoned in order to take the final decision....

5. Impact of Postal Strike

Extracts from a report, 'Countrywide dislocation of postal service'. *Hindustan Times*, 12 July 1946.

Within a week of their taking over, the 'caretaker' Government is faced with a major strike in the country. The postal service throughout India was dislocated on Thursday when postmen and lower grade staff struck work in various places.

The strike is complete in Bombay and Delhi Provinces, but all other provinces are affected in a greater or lesser degree.

Meanwhile, following an interview in Bombay with the General Secretary of the All India Postmen, Lower Grade Staff and RMS Union, Pandit Nehru has urged upon the Government and the Union to accept adjudication on all the matters in dispute.

While the Union is prepared for an adjudication, Mr Dalvi said, it would take about three days after the entire dispute is referred to adjudication for the strike to be called off. The Strike Committee, which consists of representatives of postmen from different parts of India, had to be summoned in order to take the final decision.

In a broadcast talk on Thursday night Mr Krishna Prasad, Director-General of Posts and Telegraphs, repeated Government's contention that the strike was illegal and warned the strikers that they were rendering themselves liable to penal and disciplinary action. Government, he said, could not be blamed if they were replaced.

The Government sent instructions on Thursday to all heads of Post and Telegraph circles that if those who have absented themselves from work rejoin after 72 hours their orders of suspension should be cancelled and their absence condoned.

Sir Eric Conran-Smith, member in charge of the Department, is scheduled to arrive in New Delhi from Simla on Friday when he will discuss with the officials of the Department the latest position arising out of the strike.

The following towns have not been affected by the strike so far: Lahore, Multan, Sialkot, Jullundur, Gujrat, Gorakhpur, Nagpur, Saugor, Katni, Buldana, Seoni, Itarsi and Nagpur....

Bombay

In Bombay city, the strike is total, not a single postman, packer or *mukkadam* having turned up for work. Side by side with the postal employees, 200 boys working inside the Central Telegraph Office in Bombay, carrying telegrams from the reception window to the communication instruments have also struck work.

Steel-helmeted police constables with lathis are keeping guard outside all the post-offices, while inside the offices, which appeared to be deserted due to the absence of the familiar khaki uniform and turbans, a few clerks are doing the work of sorting out letters.

From an early hour in the morning, large crowds of people flocked to the 115 delivery centres in the city to collect their mail. The postal authorities have begun sealing the roadside postboxes, not because they apprehend that the strikers would tamper with them, but because there is no one to collect the postal articles dropped in them.

Striking postmen have been deprived of the facility of drawing rations at concession rates, although they will be allowed to draw them at the postal grains shops at controlled prices. They have also been asked to vacate the premises they have been provided with by the Postal Department.

Poona

The postmen and lower grade staff having gone on strike since midnight today, the Central Post Office in Poona presents this morning almost an 'empty' appearance. A few clerks are seen doing some indoor work whilst armed parties are keeping guard outside. Small queues of people are also seen waiting to take delivery of their letters at the windows.

Ahmedabad

Postmen and lower grade staff numbering about 200 in the city went on strike on Thursday morning. Arrangements have been made in all the 30 post offices in the city for window delivery of post from 11 a.m. to 5.30 p.m.

Surat

Postmen and lower grade staff in Surat City and the district have gone on strike. People went to the different postal delivery centres to collect their mails. The morning dak [post] had not come at the usual time and small crowds of people were found waiting at each of the centres. The authorities have already informed the public not to post their articles in postboxes have been sealed and notices to this effect have been posted on them.

Calcutta

The strike of postmen and members of the lower grade postal service commenced at midnight in Calcutta.

6. Jawaharlal Nehru's Statement Regarding Postal Strike

Extracts from a news report, 'Nehru's appeal to Government'. *Hindustan Times*, 12 July 1946.

Bombay, July 11. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Congress President, in a press statement on the postal strike urges both the Government and the Postal Union to accept a full adjudication or arbitration of the entire dispute.

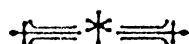
Pandit Nehru says: "Many people had heard of the coming of the postal strike, but this morning all India suddenly became conscious of it, and if no specific step is taken it is likely to be acutely conscious of it for a considerable time. A postal strike is always calamity to the public and is to be avoided as far as possible. In labour disputes generally, and more particularly in regard to essential services, a civilised Government and society provide other methods of settlement than that of the strike. Unfortunately our Government and social structure function differently.

"I am not in a position to express an opinion about the detailed demands of the postal employees, although during the last five or six months the matter has come up before me on several occasions. Prima facie, the lower-paid postal employees are badly paid and live a hard life. Their service is known for its honesty, integrity and hard work and inevitably one's sympathy goes to them.

"One fact which is significant is that the Postal Inquiry Committee which functioned a year and half ago under the chairmanship of Mr Krishna Prasad, the present Director-General of Posts and Telegraphs, presented a report in April 1945 which was suppressed. Why was it suppressed by the Government, although from all accounts it was a unanimous report? This suppression does not bring credit to the Government.

"As I have said, I am unable to express any specific opinion about the demands, but I am quite convinced that this matter as a whole ought to have been referred to adjudication or arbitration. One very small aspect of the question relating to interim relief to men on new scales of pay has been referred to adjudication and the award is expected soon through this does not cover the main points at issue.

"I would strongly urge that the Government and the All-India Postal Union to accept a fully adjudication or arbitration of the entire dispute...."



7. Diary of Major Strikes

A column, 'Strike Diary', was a regular feature of *People's Age* during this period of labour unrest, giving details of strikes by the industry at various places across India. *People's Age*, 14 July 1946.

Textiles

Madras. The strike in the Buckingham and Carnatic mills which started on June 11th continues.

Six months ago the Adjudicator had given an award in the case of this mill. So far the Government have not put it into effect.

Arrests for picketing have taken place, men fined. The workers have flatly rejected the Management's terms for settlement.

The Madras Provincial Trade Union Congress and the Communist Party in a meeting expressed sympathy and support to the strikers and demanded implementation of the Adjudicator's award.

The city Corporation has decided to pay one lakh rupees by way of relief of the strikers. The Government have appointed a Conciliator to settle the dispute.

Bombay. 5000 workers of Textile Mills fought a grim battle for several days. The owner replied with victimisation of 32 strikers and sending in blacklegs under strong police protection. The Ministry refused to intervene on the plea that the strike was illegal. In the end the Government decided to hold an enquiry into the dispute, after the strike was smashed by the owner with the help of blacklegs.

Cawnpore. Workers of 13 mills went on strike from the 18th June.

Lucknow: The strike in the RG Cotton Mills ended on June 22nd as the Government appointed the Labour Commissioner to adjudicate in the dispute. Workers authorised Shakil and Z.A. Ahmed (Communist) to represent their case.

Coimbatore, June 27. The Management of Laxmi Mills have declared a lock-out since the previous weekend following a strike by the workers. The strike has spread to Kothari Mills also.

Lahore, June 13. 100 workers of the Punjab Textile at Kot Dunichand struck work on 13th June.

Vileparle (Bombay), June 15. Workers of the CJ Cotton Mills struck work on June 15 for increased wages, adequate Dearness Allowance and reinstatement of dismissed workers.

Thana (Bombay), June 25. 90 workers of the Rowing and Drawing Department of the Raymond Wollen Mills struck work on June 24th. Other workers (500) came out in sympathy. The demand for wage increase was granted and assurance of no victimisation given. (The men went back to work on July 4th—Ed.)

Clerks

Fatehgarh (UP), June 25. Clerks of Military Accounts Department has been on strike for one week.

Gauhati (Assam), June 25. Clerks of Gauhati and Parada Military Accounts Dept had been on strike for three days.

Bareillym, June 24. Military Accounts' clerks struck work on 24th June in sympathy with strikers in other parts of the country.

Rawalpindi. 500 temporary Military Accounts' clerks are on strike for minimum wage and grades.

Lucknow, June 23. The Military Accounts clerks' (1600) strike which began on the 17th June was called off after 10 days as the Controller of Military Accounts agreed to pay wages for the strike days; the question of wage increase was referred to the Pay Commissioner (Government of India); no retrenchment for eight months was promised and those retrenched later will be suitably provided.

During the strike, there had been picketing. Four were arrested. The authorities had tried to bring in blacklegs under police protection.

Railway Workers

Kharagpur (BN Railway), June 20. 600 workers went on a one-day strike. As the Station authorities accepted their demand for increased Dearness Allowance, the strike was called off the same day.

Jhansi (GIP), June 17. 2000 workers of Loco shed went on a 2-hour strike on June 17th in protest against the delay in giving Dearness Allowance.

Madras (MSM), June 26. 350 workers of the Perambur Workshop went on a sit-down strike on June 26th, as a protest against the suspension of two workers. The authorities agreed to reinstate the men and the strike was called off.

Municipal Workers

Ahmedabad. The strike of 2400 Municipal sweepers and scavengers was called off after 19 days' struggle. The demands were for an increase in wage and Dearness Allowance, weekly holiday, Provident Fund, etc.

The authorities had the services of Councillors and other citizens from the start. The leaders of the men failed to secure, rather did not work for any popular support to their demands. In the end, the men had to go back beaten.

Behala (Bengal), June 20. Sweepers and scavengers went on strike from June 15th. After three days, the men returned to work as the authorities accepted their demands for no victimisation, full wages for the strike days, increase in Dearness Allowance, scheme for Provident Fund for all.

Hubli, June 17. The strike of Hubli Municipal workers which began on June 14th ended after two days as the authorities agreed to pay Rs 20 as Dearness Allowance from April, 1946.

Tellicherry. The coolies of the Town market resumed work as they secured most of their demands.

Beedi Workers

Ernakulam, June 15. The bidi workers' strike which has been on for even seven weeks, continues. The Maharaja refused to receive a workers' deputation. Though the Minister had ordered to raise the men's wage to Rs 2 for 1000 beedis (workers' demand) the owners have refused to yield. Arrests have taken place. The District Judge has been appointed as Conciliator.

Tripurithura, June 27. The bidi workers' strike which began on 18th June continues. Shops are being picketed and funds collected. Six strikers were arrested. Later on, the people who had assembled to protest against Nehru's arrest, marched to the Police Station and got them released. The demand is for Rs 2 as wages for 1000 bidis.

Press Workers

Cuttack, June 23. The strike in New Orissa Press is now in its fourth week. Negotiations are going on with the proprietors. From Editorial staff to compositor and menial staff, all are on strike against the wrongful dismissal of the Accountant. Workers had also resorted to hunger strike.

Bombay, June 27. At the authorities caused inordinate delay in implementing their assurances at the time of the last strike, a large number of workers in the Government Central Press stages a sit-down strike.

Comilla, June 20. After 27 days' strike, agreement was reached and the owners conceded some of the demands.

Faridpur, June 20. Workers of the Orient Press have been on strike since June 17 for a wage increase of Rs 5. The Manager after 15 years' service earns today Rs 25 only.

Rickshaw Pullers

Sylhet, June 19. Rickshaw pullers went on a one-day strike in protest against police oppression.

Patna, June 19. Rickshaw pullers struck work as a protest against police oppression and the proposed new taxation. On receiving assurance from the Minister for Local Self-Government they resumed work.

Match Factories

Olavakkode, June 20. Strike and lockout followed each other in the Bathoor Original Match Factory. The Management tried to smash the Union (three months' old) by lock out. As a result of agitation following the lock-out, the owner granted 14 days' wage to the workers.

Bareilly, June 22. 800 workers of the Western India Match factory went on strike. The dispute has been referred to the Labour Commissioner.

Engineering Industries

Lahore, June 13. The strike in the Kaycee Industries which started on the 10th June continues.

Kalahasti, June 15. Through a strike for 10 days, 2000 metal factory workers have won half of their demands.

Calcutta, June 26. After 16 days of struggle against the police and goondas, the strike in the Bengal Belting works had to be withdrawn as the local Congress leaders of Shri Rampur led blacklegs inside. (Earlier, one of them had condemned the management for calling the police.)

After eight days of strike, the Manager with some clerks and goondas beat up the picketers and then walked over their prostrate bodies.

Demands were—one month's bonus, a flat wage increase of Rs 5 for all, minimum wage of Rs 21 and Rs 15 to restore cut in ration, leave with pay, etc.

Calcutta, June 29. The Management of the National Iron and Steel Works, Belur, declared a lock-out for an indefinite period on June 14. The Labour Commissioner's Award in the dispute had been turned down in the Management. When in protest the workers went on strike the owners declared a lock-out.

The strikers are peaceful, but the owners are using the police to break the strike. The Labour Minister has been approached for personal intervention.

Gauhati, June 15. Workers of the Gauhati Mechanical Workshop went on a 2½ hour strike over delay in payment of Dearness Allowance.

Calcutta, June 26. Following a sit-down strike by workers on June 14th, the management of the B.M. Singh Workshop declared a lockout on June 15.

The lock-out continues. The men demand—reinstatement of a dismissed worker, 25 per cent wage increase, one month's leave with pay in a year, etc.

June 23. The strike of 150 men in the Indian Machine Tool Works, which began on April 19 continues. The men demand reinstatement of 11 workers who were dismissed. The Management is using the police to break the strike.

June 21. Workers of the Hanuman Engineering Works have downed tools to demand the reinstatement of two discharged workers. Other demands: Rs 20 as Dearness Allowance: Rs 40 as minimum wage, etc. The Labour Commissioner has refused to intervene as the strike has been declared illegal.

June 28. 450 workers of the Hind Machines Ltd have been on strike since June 17, to demand—proper wages and D.A (which till now they are not getting), one month's bonus, Provident Fund, leave with pay, reinstatement of the 35 workers dismissed before the expiry of the strike date, etc.

June 30. The strike and lock-out in Andrews Mill Co's Port Engineering Works continue. Picketing is going on and over 40 workers have been arrested so far. 140 more are "wanted".

The police guard the gates with tents pitched in front of the workshop. They are forcibly getting villagers as blacklegs.

Transport

Bombay, June 21. About 250 civilian drivers, fitters, etc., attached to the Transport sections of the Royal Navy, struck work for increase in wages, etc. The strike spread involving in all 500 men.

Police lathi charged and arrested seven. In the end the authorities yielded and the strike was called off.

Vizagapatam, June 28. 2000 Port workers began their strike on May 15, for an increase in basic wage and Dearness Allowance, payment of Victory Bonus, restoration of cut in allowances, reinstatement of (400) retrenched workers, etc.

Military personnel is operating the dock. The police have arrested four workers, assaulted and intimidated many more.

The authorities' terms for settlement like no retrenchment and appointment of an officer to look into grievances, etc, have been turned down by the men.

Jute

Kathiar, June 12. After 10 days' strike the Kathiar Jute Mill workers have forced the Management to reinstate dismissed workers.

Calcutta, June 30. The lock-out of 8000 workers in Agarpara, since May 18th has been lifted. During the lock-out goondas and mill watchmen assaulted the strikers. Efforts to run the Yarn Department of 19th June failed. The workers resumed work but the owners have so far victimised 100 workers. Representations to the Labour Minister have not borne any fruit.

Miscellaneous

Darjeeling. The Strike Notice of June 15th on behalf of the tea plantation workers has been withdrawn as the Bengal Labour Minister has agreed to intervene in the matter.

Calcutta, June 27. The strike (35 days' old now) in the Bengal Immunity Works (Pharmaceuticals) continues. 25 workers have been arrested so far. A meeting on the 24th of workers and citizens condemned the owner's (Capt. Naren Dutt, Member, Bengal Provincial Congress Committee) attempt to break the strike with the help of the police and blacklegs. It demanded his expulsion from the Congress. He was charged with misappropriating INA funds also. The owner called the Union anti-Congress and formed a pocket union of his own.

The strike of compounders of 17 Government hospitals which began in Calcutta, Howrah, Belgachia, Dum-Dum, etc., from June 16th was called off on June 30th as the Surgeon General agreed to pay Rs 20 as house rent in cities. Rs 10 in mofussils as also to a weekly paid holiday.

The Government had at first refused to budge. Later it made oral promises. The staff in a meeting on June 26 along with private compounders had agreed, in view of the hardship entailed on poor patients to resume work provided the Surgeon General gave his assurance in writing.

The Medical College Students' Union in a meeting supported the strike. The Secretary, All India Medical Licenciates Association appealed to doctors not to work as compounders and thus disrupt the strike. The Assam Provincial Medical Association also supported the strike.

Howrah. 600 workers of the Snow White Food Productions struck work on June 14th, for increase in wages and Dearness Allowance; one month's leave with pay; and scheme for Provident Fund.

Buxar, June 21. The workers of the Oil and Rice Mills are on strike for an increase in wages and Dearness Allowance and for leave rules.

Jubbulpore, June 15. 600 Pottery workers (Burn and Co) have been on strike since June 10. Owners have declared a lock-out and the workers are picketing the gates.

Calcutta, June 25. Watchmen and coolies of the Ration Shops in South Calcutta have forced the Government to reinstate four workers who were victimised for organising their Union.

Cawnpore, June 25. The strike in the Government Harness and Saddlery Works ended after 33 days.

Madras, June 25. 300 workers, including 100 women and marched in procession on the Labour Minister to demand the opening of the Glass Factory near Perambur whose owner had declared a lock-out when the men struck work to protest against Pandit Nehru's arrest in Kashmir.

Delhi. The Central PWD workers withdrew their strike notice on June 28 as some of their demands for permanency of jobs, DA to be included in wages, allowance for house rent and conveyance, eight hour day and Sunday as holiday were conceded.

8. Parel (Bombay) Rail Workers Force Management to Climb Down

Extracts from a news report, 'GIP Parel workshop strike'. *People's Age*, 14 July 1946.

What is to be done when a local Railway boss overrides the claims of the men to promotion (overriding incidentally even the all-powerful Railway Board) just to indulge in favouritism for some of his yes-men? 8500 workers and clerks of the GIP workshop at Parel, Bombay, gave the reply—strike.

And so the strike—the common battle of all of them, Congressmen, Leaguers, members of the Scheduled Castes' Federation and Communists—was fought for eight days, till they forced the higher boss to concede their just demands....

9. Bombay Provincial TUC and the Proposed Amendments to Bombay Industrial Disputes Act, 1938

Extracts from copy of a letter by the Acting General Secretary, Bombay Provincial Trade Union Committee, to the Chief Secretary, Political and Service Department, Government of Bombay, Bombay, 15 July 1946. File No. 90; All India Trade Union Congress Papers (1946); Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

*Bombay,
15 July 1946.*

Dear Sir,

I am in receipt of your letter dated 6-7-1946 on [proposed amendments to Bombay Industrial Disputes Act, 1938] and to note with regret that Government are not able to extend the period of time allowed for the expression of opinion by the BPTUC on the proposed amendments to the BID Act....

Your obedient servant,
Ag. General Secretary.

10. Strike Situation in Madras Province

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Madras province for the first half of July 1946. Fortnightly Reports; Public (General) Department, Government of Madras (1946); Tamil Nadu State Archives.

Labour

The postal strike did not commence in this Province on 11-7-1946. The President of the Madras Provincial Postal and Lower Grade Staff Union announced that the strike had been called off so far as this Province was concerned. This caused considerable resentment amongst the Committee members of the Union and on 12-7-1946 the Committee met with the Vice-President in the chair and evidently under the instructions received from Bombay decided to call the strike from the 13th. The strike which thus commenced from 13th has been peaceful so far. In Madras City about one thousand workers affected. Attempts have been made to recruit substitute labour. Government staff (like the Madras Fire Service Personnel) which would be spared temporarily has been fully employed and the window delivery system has been put into effect. The strike has spread to several towns in the Province but so far postal services and facilities have not been seriously affected.

The strike in the Buckingham and Carnatic Mills in Madras City continues. Government have issued a communique affirming the right of workers to picket but declaring at the same time that only picketing of a peaceful and non-violent nature will be permitted. This policy has been criticized at several meetings of the workers. A large number of workers have been arrested for causing obstruction. On 4-7-1946 the workers assaulted the Assistant Welfare Officer of the Mills, attempted to take him forcibly to the union office to sign a declaration that he would not go to work, and robbed him of his revolver. On 12-7-1946, the strikers also staged a demonstration in front of the Government Secretariat. It is unfortunate that the Board of Conciliation appointed by the Government has been unable to achieve a settlement of the

dispute as the workers refused to accept the award—which was that the Management should agree to have not more than four Punjabi watchmen inside the Mills.

The adjudicator appointed by the Government in the dispute between Messrs Spencer & Co and their workers has passed an award and Government have issued orders implementing it. It is reported that the workers have received the award with satisfaction as under the award all strikers are to be taken back to work or paid wages for the period of the strike.

The Communist controlled Corporation Labour Union has given a strike notice to the Commissioner of the Corporation of Madras threatening a strike on 3-8-1946 if their demands for increased basic wages, house accommodation, provident fund, etc., are not conceded. The Madras Corporation Workers Union which is opposed to the Communist controlled union has condemned the attempt of the Communists to precipitate a crisis and advised the workers not to go on strike.

The strike in the Perambur Workshop of the M&SM Railway referred in the previous report has since terminated, it continued, for about ten days.

There has been a wave of strikes in the industrial areas of Coimbatore and Salem district, the most important being at the Magnesite Syndicate Ltd, Mettur where nearly 1700 workers are involved. The dispute between the management and the workers of the Indian Metal and Metallurgical Corporation Ltd, Mettur, has been referred to adjudication.

At Tuticorin, one of the important ports of the Province, workers of the port went on strike on 8-7-1946. The cause of the strike is as yet not known and work at the Port is being carried on.

11. Strike Situation in Bombay Province

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Bombay Province for the first half of July 1946. File No. 18/7/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Labour

The labour situation in the Province was generally peaceful. There were strikes in two industrial concerns in Bombay and in the GIP Railway Workshop, His Majesty's Mint and in the Postal and Telegraph Department.

The strike in His Majesty's Mint related to a demand for the reinstatement of some discharged workers and ended on the same day.

Some 6000 workers of the GIP Railway Workshop struck work on July 1st demanding the withdrawal of the extension granted to twenty-five superannuated men, but they resumed work on July 9th, after the Railway authorities assured them that the extension granted would in no way affect the promotions of juniors.

About 725 clerks working in the offices of the India United Group of Mills (consisting of six mills in Bombay) went on strike on July 2nd, demanding reinstatement of the Deputy Chief Engineer of one of the Mills whose services were dispensed with by the management. The strike continues.

The Dock Workers at Mazagaon, Bombay, staged a stay-in strike from 6th July following the refusal of the management to remove the Labour Welfare Officer who is not popular with the workers. As, in spite of the advice of the Minister for Labour to adopt constitutional means

for obtaining their demands and to abandon the illegal strike, the workers persisted in their attitude, the management declared a lock-out from 12th July.

The strike of postmen and lower grade staff of the Postal Department commenced from July 11th and that of the inferior staff of the Telegraph Department of July 15th. The former strike is complete in Bombay City and in certain other towns, but is so far peaceful. Communists have not taken a lead in the agitation because they consider the strike untimely. Ninth August Group workers are, however, playing a leading part in working up the strike in Maharashtra, though their presence in this field does not find favour with the representatives of the Postal Unions. The general public is at present showing little interest in the strike but is being subjected to growing inconvenience as the disposal of mail is being badly delayed....

12. Fewer Fresh Strikes in Bengal

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Bengal for the first half of July 1946. File No. 18/7/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Labour

19. The number of fresh strikes during the period have been few, the most important being the Postal strike which began on the 11th and shows no sign of ending though in the initial stages there was some hope that the strikers might be brought to see reasons.

20. The workers of the Bata Shoe Company secured a victory over the management when they went on strike without notice against the decision to close the training school and forced the company to reopen it.

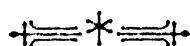
21. Intense inconvenience was caused to the general public when some 4000 workers of the Calcutta Tramways Company stopped work without notice on the 10th as a protest against the release of a passenger handed over to the Police of an alleged assault on a conductor. The Labour Commissioner succeeded in persuading the union to order its men back to work the next day.

22. The tendency among workers to take recourse to violence continues. The employees of the Metal Box Company assaulted the Manager and went on a stay-in-strike when the culprits were dismissed. A lockout has since been declared by the company.

23. The strike and lockout in the National Iron and Port Engineering Works respectively have ended but the strikes at the Fort Gloster Jute Mill and the Bengal Immunity Company continued.

24. The labour situation in Burnpur is still reported to be potentially dangerous though it is not yet certain whether the workers will go on strike.

25. The hope that was expressed in the last Report that the threatened strikes in the Darjeeling Tea Gardens might be prevented has been fulfilled and the strike notices have been withdrawn. There are, however, signs of trouble developing on some of the Duars gardens in the district of Jalpaiguri, and an investigation is being undertaken there.



13. Postal Strike in the United Provinces

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for the United Provinces for the first half of July 1946. File No. 18/7/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Industrial

The event of the first half of July has been the postal strike which commenced on July 11 and still continues. Although partial only and, in its initial stages, affecting principally Allahabad and Lucknow, it has caused considerable dislocation and has now spread to a number of the centres. Arrangements for window deliveries have been made and district officers have been instructed to maintain order and to arrange to take delivery of official mail. In Allahabad only has there been serious trouble, and over 60 arrests have been made there for obstruction.

Unrest continues among the employees of the Cawnpore Textile Mills who went on strike on July 6, the employees of Cooper Allen Mills of Cawnpore and of the Kaycee Glass Factory at Shikokabad and among municipal sweepers in Bundelkhand and Meerut. Communists made an unsuccessful appeal to railway employees to go on strike at Benaras on June 22. At Moghalsarai, on the other hand, speakers have threatened a general railway strike in December, while at Gorakhpur a similar strike is threatened for January 1 next.

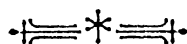
It is indicative of the attitude of labour leaders that while the demands of the Lucknow Press Workers have been referred to a conciliation officer whose decision the proprietors have agreed to accept, the workers insist that they will take action if the decision is against them.

14. Mill Owners Threaten Lock-outs in the Punjab

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for the Punjab for the first half of July 1946. File No. 18/7/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Labour

The postal strike is now under way in several important towns and is causing much public inconvenience. In general the labour situation has not improved and where there are industrial concerns there are either strikes, threats of strike, or deliberate efforts to bring strikes about. Lahore and Amritsar are particularly affected and in the latter place an association of owners has threatened to close the mills it controls if the position is not radically improved by Government intervention. There is but little doubt that the fact that some strikes and threats of strikes have resulted in substantial concessions being granted has increased the value and attractiveness of the strike weapon in the estimation of labour generally. In view of this, and while the economic and political situations remain unsatisfactory, as improvement in labour affairs cannot reasonably be anticipated.



15. Postal Strike Makes Bihar Industrial Outlook Gloomy

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Bihar for the first half of July 1946. File No. 18/7/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Labour

The Deputy Commissioner regards the industrial outlook in Jamshedpur and the surrounding areas as very gloomy. The lock-out in the Tatanagar Foundry continues and the workers, who are receiving only small doles from the Labour Union, are reported to be getting very restive. Against the instructions of the Labour Union, but at the instigation of Congress Socialist Party workers, the employees in the Wheel, Tyre and Axle plants of Tatas struck on the 27th June, but had to resume work unconditionally. Matters are not helped by the delay in announcing the award of the adjudicator in the Tinplate Company dispute. Professor Abdul Bari continues to maintain his hold over labour in Jamshedpur although at the end of June all the left wing parties there had a joint meeting to frame measures to offer joint opposition to him. In the Jharia coalfield too, the Congress Socialist Party are said to be trying to weaken the Professor's influence without success. However, the Deputy Commissioner reports that the standard of work in the heavy industries in Jamshedpur is deteriorating, but the Companies dare not take any action to enforce better standards for fear of reactions on labour. If efficiency deteriorates further, the Deputy Commissioner considers that the consequences may be serious and the industries in and around Jamshedpur may be forced to mechanise their plants.

The strike in the China Clay Mines in Singhbhum mentioned in the last report continues and there have been other short-lived strikes including one in the Hindusthan Cycle Factory at Patna where employees were enraged because the police and factory officials recovered some stolen parts from the house of one of the workers. Another occurred in the Muktapur Jute Mills, Darbhanga, where the manager refused to give leave to the workmen to attend a meeting held in honour of Mr Jai Prakash Narayan. The Gaya Cotton and Jute Mills Arbitration Committee has not yet published its award.

The threatened All-India Postal strike began on the 11th July and covers most of the urban areas in Bihar, but not of Chota Nagpur. In Patna a number of boys scouts volunteered at the instance of the postal authorities, but were threatened by students and have not really been of very much assistance in consequence. Temporary recruitment by the postal authorities is taking place and so far no untoward incident has occurred. Naturally, however, in spite of what has been done, dislocation and inconvenience to the public has been considerable. The local press as a whole has been sympathetic towards the strikes and those boys scouts who volunteered have been criticized.

16. Police Join Ranks of the Disaffected in Assam

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Assam for the first half of July 1946. File No. 18/7/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Labour

The strike fever is on the increase, encouraged by the indefatigable attention of Communists and the apparent success achieved in other parts of India. So far the Postal worker's strike has

been confined to Shillong, where alone they are in enjoyment of a special allowance amounting to 30 per cent of pay and where consequently a strike is least justifiable. A strike meeting on the 11th was attended by two members-designate of the Constituent Assembly—Messrs R.K. Chaudhury and O.K. Das, who in somewhat ambivalent speeches gave indication of their sympathy for the strikes, which was made use of by the Communists to start picketing the next day. A good deal of criticism was directed at the attempt of the Postal authorities to recruit substitutes. Before discussions between the Ministry and the Director of Posts and Telegraphs and the Deputy Commissioner, Mr R.K. Chaudhury spoke to the picketers, who had adopted *Satyagraha* methods, and explained that picketing had not the support of Congress. The pickets were then withdrawn but department ultimatum to the strikers to return to within 72 hours has not been obeyed and the strike continues.

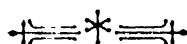
There have been several strikes in tea gardens, particularly in Lakhimpur, where maldistribution of cloth has only recently been rectified, and much apprehension appears to have spread lest rations should be reduced. Government are considering convening a conference amongst all interested parties in connection with the conditions of labour on plantations. A short-lived strike also occurred at the Loco Shed at Lumding on account of non-payment of arrear dearness allowance.

A strike notice has been received from the employees of the Government Press, to expire in thirty days, and there are rumours of strikes among other classes of Government servants.

The situation in the Police Force at Dhubri has for some time caused some anxiety. Apparently the morale of the Police has been deteriorating for some time, partly, it seems likely, owing to mishandling and partly for reasons still obscure. Disaffection came to a head as soon as a new Superintendent of Police took charge, with a strike among the Armed Police which lasted only a few hours, but has left the men truculent and intransigent. The disaffected element, which amounts to about four-fifths of the Armed Police at Headquarters, appears to be the local men, those from the United Provinces and Bihar having remained outwardly loyal. Guards were only found with difficulty from among the latest recruits. The Inspector General of Police proceeded from Sadiya to Dhubri on hearing of the trouble but had a most difficult journey down the flooded Brahmaputra valley, at one point narrowly escaping death by drowning. The Police Vehicle in which he and some other officers were working part of their way back to Shillong was driven off the road by a charge of wild buffalo and thrown into the water. A Civil Surgeon among the party was for some time pinned below the truck.

Law and Order

The most serious matter is the indiscipline among the Goalpara Police. It is reported that unless the matter is firmly handled there is a danger of the strike mania and indiscipline spreading to the town Police, and possibly outside the district. The grant of increase in pay to the Bengal Police, strikes among whom have naturally become known throughout the Assam force, has encouraged demands for improved pay which are still under consideration.



17. Communist Professional Agitators Blamed for Strikes in Delhi

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Delhi for the first half of July 1946. File No. 18/7/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Political

... It must be recognised that the present strikes and threats of strikes in India are political are not really economic at all, and so long as the various unions are allowed to be controlled by Communist professional agitators who themselves having nothing to do with the service or factory concerned, no amount of conciliation or the granting of concessions will have any satisfying effect. These Communist and extreme Congress agitators do not want any settlement and merely regard each concession given under duress of a threat of strike as increasing their power in the unions and to be followed by more and more demands. All the leaflets, posters and the speeches of the leaders do nothing but harangue the men to red revolution. As an example of how these Communist agitators are establishing their hold on labour can be mentioned the lighting strike in the Tramway section of the Delhi Electric Supply and Traction Company the other evening at about 4 p.m. because driver of a tramcar was convicted by a magistrate for culpable homicide not amounting to murder and sentenced to six months imprisonment for killing a person with his tramcar. By 6 p.m. the Communist Secretary of the Delhi Electric Supply and Traction Company Union was haranguing the men in a most objectionable speech and had the majority of them out on strike for the rest of the evening. He was arrested for the speech the following morning....

Labour

... There are at present over 20,000 people on strike in Delhi, the bulk of them being from the Delhi Cloth Mills and the Birla Mills, and the Union of Delhi Municipal Committee Workers, which is controlled and dominated by Communists, has given notice of a strike from the 29th July, 1946....

18. Imperial Bank Clerks to Go on Strike as of 1 August

New report, 'Imperial Bank clerks in Bengal to strike'. *Free Press Journal*, 17 July 1946.

Calcutta, July 16. The decision to go on strike from August 1 was taken unanimously at an emergent [emergency] meeting held last evening under the auspices of the Imperial Bank of India Indian Staff Association, announces the President of the Association, Dr Nalinaksha Sanyal.

The President has accordingly sent notice of the strike to the Secretary and Treasurer, Imperial Bank of India, Calcutta. Branches and sub-pay offices throughout the Bengal Circle of the Bank has also been intimated of the decision. These comprise, says the President about 200 branches, pay offices and sub pay offices extending from Rangoon to Srinagar and Peshawar, involving more than 2500 employees.

Announcing the strike decision the President says: "At an emergent [emergency] meeting held this evening under the auspices of the Imperial Bank of India Indian Staff Association the staff of the Imperial Bank unanimously rejected the offer of the authorities to enhance the basic salary by 20 per cent only, as against their demand for 40 per cent general increment, with a minimum of Rs 75 for clerical, Rs 50 for poddars and collectors, and Rs 25 for durwans

and menials. The reply of the authorities dated the 15th July on other points also was considered wholly unsatisfactory. It was unanimously decided to go on strike from the 1st August.”—API.

19. General Strike Threatened if Postal Strike Not Settled

Extracts from a news report, ‘Threat of general strike’. *Free Press Journal*, 18 July 1946.

Bombay, Wednesday. The whole country is on the eve of a gigantic upheaval if the Postal Authorities delay any longer a settlement with the strikers. A general strike, the proportions of which have never before been witnessed in Indian history, is threatened if dilatory tactics are adopted by the Government of India.

Mr S. Guruswamy, Secretary of the All India Railwaymen’s Federation told the *Free Press Journal* today that the whole-hearted sympathy of the Railwaymen was with the strikers. The Railwaymen, he said, would reconsider their position in the light of the postal adjudicator’s award and the decision of the Government thereon.

He condemned outright the policy of the Government in declaring strikes illegal without adjudication of all the issues in dispute.

The Bombay Provincial Trade Union Congress meets tomorrow to give a call for a province-wide strike.

Meanwhile Mr V.G. Dalvi, Secretary of the All India Postmen and Lower Grade Staff Union has repudiated the action of Dewan Chamanlal, President of the Postal Employees Federation, in conducting negotiations with the postal authorities in Delhi. “The Union,” he says “is not a member of the Federation and has neither approached nor authorised Dewan Chamanlal to carry on these negotiations or to come to any settlement on their behalf. Any settlement arrived at by Dewan Chamanlal will not be binding on the Union.

More Strikes

With the dawn of the eight[h] day of the post and telegraph strike, the situation has assumed alarming proportions. It has ceased to be the issue of the strikers alone and is becoming a public issue. 25,000 students launched a city-wide strike today. Six mills and a couple of factories closed down as a result of their workers having absented themselves in sympathy with the postal strikers. The office staff of the telegraph depot at Sawri staged a walk-out at 11 a.m. today and marched in procession shouting slogans. Students, including little school children, joined in merry procession’s parading before the GPO and condemning the postal authorities....

20. Vallabhbhai Patel Urges Postal Authorities to Take Strike Seriously

News report, ‘Sardar Patel warns against official callousness’. *Hindustan Times*, 18 July 1946.

Bombay, July 17. The people’s patience had been sorely tried by the officials’ unsympathetic handling of the postal strike and that if the authorities did not act in time, the strike fever might spread to other services, said Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel commenting on the postal strike.

Sardar Patel added: “The postal strike in the city of Bombay and all over the presidency is on for nearly a week. It has now spread to many other provinces. But here in Bombay business is almost at a standstill and no post has been delivered throughout the past week.”

Bombay Premier's Appeal

"Mr Kher, the Prime Minister of Bombay, who saw how trade and business were being affected and how the people were suffering, got into touch with the Postmaster-General of Bombay and advised him to arrange for a meeting between the Director-General of Posts and Telegraphs at Delhi and the Secretary of the All India Postmen and Lower Grade Staff Union. Both the Prime Minister and Mr Pakwasa, President of the Bombay Legislative Council, appealed to the postal authorities to arrange for such a meeting.

"It was expected that a result of their effort, there would be a meeting for discussion of the immediate grievances and for the termination of the strike without any delay.

"The exasperating statement issued by the Director-General from Delhi in the right royal bureaucratic fashion that his generous offer of permission to see him was as usual open to the Secretary of the All India Postmen and Lower Grade Staff Union if he wanted to avail himself of the opportunity has come as a shock to us all here. He has been repeating 'ad nauseum' his pet slogan that the postal strike is illegal but at the same time it is clear from his statement that he is afraid to take any action.

Official Callousness

The Postmaster-General, Bombay, taking a cue from his chief, has issued a statement which makes people believe that there is nothing wrong with the Postal Department. Between these two officers there is a conspiracy to lead people to believe that everything is all right or will soon be all right. With astonishing callousness it is announced they will take a week to consider the Adjudicator's award....

"People patience has been sorely tried. The officials are behaving as if everything is normal and that they can deal with the question in a leisurely manner. If they do not act in time, the strike fever which is infectious may soon affect other services and no one knows where the trouble will end."

21. Railwaymen Threaten Sympathy Action with Postal Workers

Extracts from a news report, 'Strike threat by railwaymen'. *Hindustan Times*, 19 July, 1946.

Bombay, July 18. Railwaymen, whose threatened all-India strike was abandoned at the last hour a few days ago, "would be justified in reconsidering their position and may even be driven to take measures to reinforce the postal workers in their struggle," said Mr S. Guruswamy, General Secretary of the Railwaymen's Federation, yesterday....

22. Government Concedes Demands of Postal Strikers

Extracts from a news report, 'Adjudicator's award in postal dispute'. *Hindustan Times*, 19 July 1946.

An increase varying between 5 per cent and 50 per cent in the basic pay of the non-gazetted staff of the Posts and Telegraphs Department is the main recommendation of the Adjudicator, Mr Justice Rajadhyaksha. The lowest paid staff will get the highest percentage of increase.

The Government of India announced on Thursday night their willingness to accept in their entirety the Adjudicator's recommendations for relief to the non-gazetted staff of the P and T Department on new scales of pay to take effect from July 1, 1946.

The Government of India are further willing to extend the reliefs relating to grain concession allowance and the upgrading of all C areas into B for purposes of dearness allowance to those non-gazetted staff of the Department who are on the old scales of pay....

23. Postal Strikers Continue Action Despite Government Threats

Extracts from an article, 'Victory to postmen!'. *People's Age*, 21 July 1946.

First in 1920, and now again in 1946, a quarter of a century after, with the greatest of wars thrown in between. Then the postmen fought and won their battle, single-handed though they were. They will win again, for in addition to their own strength and unity, they have the might of 40 crore Indians behind them.

The bureaucrats, however, think otherwise. They started off with a war of nerves. Alienate public sympathy from the postmen-that was their first aim.

"The workers demands are too petty and not new," declared Krishna Prasada. "They will cost about Rs 10.74 crores. Therefore the postcard will have to be priced at one anna," warned another Govt spokesman.

Threats, Intimidation

Then they tried to intimidate and frighten the postmen.

In Bombay cheap grain facilities were ordered to be withdrawn from July 15.

Occupants of Govt quarters were warned that they might have to vacate if they went on strike.

Help of military personnel would be taken; police would protect loyal strikers; Boy Scouts would come forward to save the public from inconvenience; the strike would be illegal-such were the threats held out before the workers.

To break their morale, they were told that the strike would fizzle out because among other things, the powerful Federation of Posts and Telegraphs Unions, led by Dewan Chamanlal, and the Posts and Telegraphs Muslim Employees' Association were opposed to it-and they represented more than 75 per cent of the staff

Calculations Upset

The strike, however, did come off on the 11th as scheduled, upsetting all the calculations of the bureaucrats. And it shows no signs of weakening....

July 11: First day of strike. Crowds gather outside every post office curious to know if the strike is really a success. It is-one hundred per cent.

The Bombay Students' Union (AISF) has come out with a handbill. All support to the strike. Meetings in colleges.

"Our college shall not be allowed to be used to break the strike," declare the students, "we shall picket the colleges if they are used as post offices." Sixty volunteers enrol themselves for picketing....

July 13: Third day of the strike. The strike is spreading. Encouraging news comes from everywhere. Madras, where the strike was not complete to begin with, is now fully in it....

July 14: Today is a holiday, being Sunday. Thirty lakh letters pile up at the GPO. It is the day when 700 men of the Telegraph Dept. will strike....

24. Krishna Prasada Report Reveals Plight of Postmen

Article, 'Snapshots from suppressed Krishna Prasada Report'. *People's Age*, 21 July 1946.

The Krishna Prasada report—go to any meeting in connection with the Postal strike and you will hear of this report. It was written in 1945 by a Committee appointed by the Government of India to tide over the threat of a strike by Postmen. It was presided over by Mr Krishna Prasada, the present Director-General of Posts and Telegraphs.

The report was suppressed. What it revealed the Government dared not publish. For it would have created a scandal in the civilised world, so horrifying were the conditions that the Committee was forced to note.

Today *People's Age* gives the following exclusive snapshots from the 'Forbidden Report'. Read them and you will know why the Report was suppressed and also why the postal employees are out today on strike, why every Indian must support them. Remember also that these are conditions in the best Provinces. You can imagine what they must be in the worst.

Indebtedness among employees (to take just two findings): In Poona among postmen and mail guards—the Committee found four cases who in 1939 had borrowed approximately Rs 1000. In 1944, 28 cases recorded—sum borrowed approximately Rs 15,000. Inferior staff—in 1944, 33 cases borrowed Rs 8000.

In 1942–43, the Committee recorded from 13 Postal Cooperative Societies in Bombay Circle, there were 3624 borrowers; loans granted approximately Rs 5,16,000. Next year, borrowers approximately 4000; loan granted Rs 6½ lakhs.

In 1944, of the 40,000 borrowed by Postmen and lower staff in Bombay city, only Rs 13,000 were loaned by the Cooperative Societies, the rest, Rs 27,000, has to be borrowed from Pathans, Marwaris, etc., who charge a rate of usury at 300% or more.

A witness before the Committee was asked about what recreation he had. Recreation? That was a foreign word to him. He never had it. When pressed for answer, he replied: "I take my daughter out, whenever I get some spare time. But on the road she asks for sweets. And then I have to rush her back home." He could not afford to give her that!

Before the Committee came a shabby village postman, a human skeleton, he had blisters on his feet. "Are you ill," asked the boss. The witness showed how he had to cover jungle areas on foot for seven days at a stretch, carrying even valuable postal parcels. He had no shoes, no place for rest or food. And he obviously could not carry his ration for seven days on person.

They say the Committee was "moved".

25. General Strike in Support of Postal Workers

Extracts from a news report, 'General strike total success'. *Free Press Journal*, 23 July 1946.

For the first time since its commencement twelve days ago, the City rudely woke up today to the gravity of the postal strike when half a million workers, in answer to the call of the Bombay Provincial Trade Union Congress, staged a successful and total general strike to demonstrate

their solidarity with the post and telegraph workers on strike. Earlier the All-India Telegraph Union comprising of over 1,000 telegraphists and clerks laid down tools thus cutting off Bombay's last line of communications with the outside world.

The general strike was so thorough that by noon not a single mill or factory was left working. Buses and trams completely disappeared from the streets of Bombay compelling the large office going population in Bombay to foot it out.

Bombay put on a holiday atmosphere and the streets were lined with idle workers. The worst affected part of the City was the industrial area, where 55 mills had to close down completely as workmen failed to turn up. Similarly all factories and workshops in the Sewri area were also locked....

26. South Indian Railway Strike Begins at Golden Rock

Press communique by the General Manager, South Indian Railway; Trichinopoly, 28 July 1946. File No. 2040; Public (General) Department, Government of Madras (1946); Tamil Nadu State Archives.

Press Communique

A large section of the workmen in Golden Rock Workshops numbering about three thousand commenced a Stay-in strike on the 23rd July 1946. A section of the men numbering about 1200 continues to do work as usual.

2. No notice was given to the Administration of this strike, nor was any reason advanced by the men concerned for resorting to the strike. In an endeavour to ascertain the reasons for the strike, the Chief Mechanical Engineer addressed the three Unions functioning in Golden Rock, namely, the SI Railway Labour Union, the Employees' Association and the Workers' Union. The two latter disowned all responsibility for the strike, whereas the Labour Union replied that as representatives of the workers they were prepared to support their demands and stand by them.

3. The Conciliation Officer, Madras, at the request of the Administration, arrived in Trichinopoly on the 27th and had talks first with representatives of the Labour Union, then with the General Manager and subsequently with both. Efforts to reach a settlement were unfruitful as the General Secretary of the Labour Union insisted that the demands, listed below, should be complied with before the men could be asked to call off the Strike.

- 1) Withdrawal of the deletion of a certain clause in the Discipline and Appeal Rules;
- 2) Reinstatement of six discharged men, three from the workshops and three from other Departments;
- 3) Cancellation of the suspension orders pending in the Workshops;
- 4) Review of all cases of punishment meted out since May 1946;
- 5) Institution of a monetary system of punishment, namely Fine System;
- 6) Removal of the restrictions imposed on the grant of leave in the Shops and the system of punishment of late attenders; and
- 7) Grant of wages and dearness allowances for the Strike period.

4. The workers on stay-in strike behaved peacefully on the first day of the strike, but subsequently resorted to various acts of intimidation and hooliganism thereby interfering with those who were at work in the execution of their jobs. On 27th July, representatives of the

Workers' Union and the Employees' Association met the General Manager and urged him to take steps which could enable workers, not on stay-instrike, to carry on their work under peaceful conditions.

5. In order to achieve this object it has been decided that on Thursday, the 1st August 1946, only those workmen who have been actually working at their jobs will be permitted to go into the Workshops. Those now on stay-in strike who signify their willingness to work by signing a declaration to that effect will be allowed to go into the Shops as and when they declare their willingness to do so.

6. A certain section of non-workshop staff working in Golden Rock has also joined the strike. These mainly comprise sweepers, drainage and waterworks staff numbering about 250. Commencing from the 24th, these men have been sitting at their work spots or have been wandering about and have refused to carry out the duties allotted to them. Steps are being taken to ensure the continuance of all essential services.

27. Sympathy Strikes for Postmen in Bombay

Extracts from a news report, 'Bombay's working masses rally behind postmen'. *People's Age*, 28 July 1946.

Textile workers, leaders of India's working-class, led the action. Railway workers from the workshop and the line, on the GIP and the BB&CI, Dock workers and Port Trust workers, tram workers and bus workers, engineering workers, Gas Company workers, transport workers, oil workers, rubber workers, glassworkers, workers from hotels, workers from the Race Course and sports clubs; clerks from the GPO, clerks from mills (India United Group), clerks from the Industries and Supply Department, clerks from the Bombay Mutual Insurance Company, clerks of the BEST office, clerks from many more offices; 'gumastas' from a number of business firms, students from a number of schools. These were the men and women who came out on the streets to make July 22 a red-letter day in the annals of Bombay's working class history.

They came out in response to the call of the Bombay Provincial Trade Union Congress (BPTUC) to observe a one-day sympathetic strike in support of the all-India postal worker's strike....

... 90 mills, factories and workshops came out to back the postal workers. Four lakhs of workers were on the streets....

28. Proposed Amendments to Bombay Industrial Disputes Act, 1938

Extracts from an article, 'Move to further curtail workers' rights'. *People's Age*, 28 July 1946.

On May 22nd, the Bombay Congress Ministry announced its labour policy. It laid emphasis on introducing amendments to its own eight year old Act (Bombay Industrial Disputes Act) which had revealed in it "a few legal gaps and ambiguities and brought out certain administrative difficulties."

Significantly enough, this statement was followed by a reign of wholesale suppression of working-class strikes in Bombay, legal or illegal.

The proposed amendments to this act, which have now been announced, seek to put flesh into the skeleton of May 22. A bill embodying these will soon be on the anvil of the Bombay

Legislative Assembly. It will then help other Congress Ministries to go ahead with similar legislation in their Provinces.

Will Hit Workers

The Act, as amended, seeks finally to close the gaps and loopholes (in favour of workers) in the present measure and give a better weapon in the hands of the owners to stifle militant trade unions. Lest the Ministry be accused of 'preferential treatment' (the present Act applies only to the textile workers), the amended Act will apply to all industries.

Eight years ago, when the Bill was first introduced in the Assembly, workers all over the Province had come out on a mighty one-day protest strike against it demanding its repeal.

The Ministry instead of bending before it tried to drown this fury in the blood of the two workers whom its police murdered in Bombay on November 7, 1938. Since then the BID Act has come to be called the "Black Act".

The father of the Bill, Syt. Gulzarilal Nanda, was then Parliamentary Secretary to Premier Kher. Now he himself is Labour Minister. Naturally, he likes to do his job better and he has learnt a lot too.

In the Act as it is, unions recognised by the owners—a position Nanda knew could never be attained by the Red Flag unions—had some definite advantages. Nanda then fondly hoped that unions under the aegis of the bosses would flourish. Unfortunately for him that only proved a dream.

But if that failed, Nanda refused to accept defeat. If being owner recognised means that the union is boycotted by the workers, then give it a twist and call it 'Government recognised', thinks Nanda. With the Ministry in your hands, it may as well serve the old game. Why not?

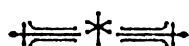
Compulsory Arbitration

And what will these 'unions' look like? They must accept the principle of compulsory arbitration. In other words, they must say good-bye to strike as the legitimate and inalienable right of the working-class.

In return, Nanda offers them some 'favours'. They will be 'free' to collect subscriptions inside the mill or factory, put up their notices inside, lodge complaints, etc. Lest any trick be played, these unions must embody this principle of compulsory arbitration in their very constitutions. But the mass membership may one day revolt against the constitution itself? Cute Mr Nanda says: "Then have no mass unions. Just raise the membership fees. Make it As [annas] 4 a month!"

What Nanda has offered as favours are really the basic rights of a trade union. A popular ministry should have made unqualified statutory provisions for the same. But Nanda's 'square deal' will have no such deviations from its straight path!

He is so serious over it that even the 'representative' unions (who have 25 per cent of the workers in the industry as its members) under Nanda's present Act cannot claim these rights, unless they conform to the latest pattern!....



29. Delhi Municipal Workers on Strike

Extracts from a news report, '3000 municipal workers on strike'. *Hindustan Times*, 30 July 1946.

Over 3000 municipal workers including those belonging to the Health and Engineering Departments struck work on Monday morning, in accordance with the decision of the Delhi Municipal Workers' Union. According to the Municipal Secretary, only 800 municipal sweepers out of a total strength of 2000 are working. The Municipal Workshop and the Municipal Press have also been closed....

Most of the streets in the city remained uncleaned, although Chandni Chowk seems to have received special attention of the authorities....

The staff of the Imperial Bank have decided to go on strike from August 1.

30. Despite Inconveniences Bengal Public Supports Strikers

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Bengal for the second half of July 1946.

File No. 18/1/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Political

7. The Province has continued to endure the inconveniences of the postal strike but, despite the inconveniences, there is no sign that public opinion is turning against the strikers. On the contrary the opposite, if anything, appears to be the case. The postal situation deteriorated considerably during the period and from the 22nd, a general strike of postal, telegraph and telephone workers was declared throughout the Province. The initial response to the decision was heartening to the strikers in Calcutta, and only the minimum service could be maintained at the General Post Office and the Central Telegraph Office. The Telephone organisation managed to struggle on with a considerably reduced staff until the 28th, when they were forced to closedown entirely and remain closed at the time of drafting this report. In the districts the extent of the success of the strikers varies but everywhere very great inconvenience is being experienced.

8. The one-day general strike of all workers organised by the Trade Union Congress with Mrinal Kanti Bose at the head took place on the 29th. Reports from districts have not yet been received but in Calcutta there was almost complete cessation of vehicular traffic and public transport services were all stopped. Shops and markets were closed and industrial firms, mercantile office sand banks could transact very little work due to the absence of almost all of their staffs. Private vehicles were intercepted and their occupants forced to alight or made to turn back. Brickbats were thrown at military and police lorries but the brick batting was never very intensive. All the main offices in the Clive Street and Dalhousie Square area were picketed and this was particularly noticeable at Writers' Buildings and at the All-India Radio Station in Garstin Place. Information was received at Lalbazar that women picketers had entered the Radio Station and there was the liklihood of their demaging valuable equipment. The police party sent to investigate were strongly resisted at the gate of the Radio Station by a band of very determined women picketers several of whom caught hold of the uniform of the police officers including their revolver holsters. The strikers were unsuccessful in their effort to bring out workers from the Calcutta Electric Supply Corporation. Production of the Oriental Gas

Company was maintained because of a previous pact entered into by the Manager that the production-workers would be paid double salaries for the day while the remainder would be allowed to absent themselves. A feature of the day was the good use made by the demonstrators of loud speakers to control crowds and to pass on information: action to prevent the use of loud speakers in public places is under the consideration of Government. A mass meeting, attended by about a lakh of people was held on the maidan in the afternoon organized by the Congress, Forward Bloc, Socialist Party, Trade Union Congress, the Congress Socialist Party, Seafarers' Organisation, Communist Party of India, and many other organisations. A number of speeches were delivered of an anti-British nature calling on the workers to unite and emphasizing the strike was a step forward in [on]their road to freedom. There was some interference with the train service on the suburban lines of the Bengal-Nagpur Railway near Uluberia and on the main lines of the East Indian Railway in the districts of Howrah and Hooghly, but crowds were persuaded to disperse by 1 p.m.

Most of the mills in the industrial area were closed.

9. A development-considered at present to be an offshoot of the Post and Telegraph strike was a series of attacks during the afternoon of the 30th or very early in the morning of the 31st on the railway telegraphic communications to the south of Calcutta resulting in the train services in that section being reduced by 50 per cent.

10. The processions and demonstrations on the 29th were preceded, on the 24th, by processions and meetings organised by the Political Prisoners Release Committee—a CPI organisation—urging the immediate release of all political prisoners. Following a meeting attended by some 5000 persons presided over by J.C. Gupta, a procession of some 6000, which later swelled to 15,000, including 2000 women students, paraded the streets and halted in the grounds of the Assembly Building. The Hon'ble Chief Minister addressed the crowd and stated that he would pass orders on the cases of the remaining political prisoners in detention by the 15th August. The crowd then dispersed after a certain amount of rowdiness directed chiefly against the police.

12. Leaflets purporting to have been issued by police constables have appeared in Dinajpur, Pabna and Dacca. Information has also been received that four constables of the Howrah police had approached to local group of the CP: to organise a strike among the police in that district: this information is still being worked over. The Inspector-General of Police has no doubt about the loyalty of the police as a whole at the present moment but points out that it would be extraordinary if some of them were not affected to a greater or lesser extent by the strike fever which is such a marked feature of conditions in the Province at the present time. The need for a quick decision on the issue of the revised pay-scale becomes, in the opinion of the Inspector-General of Police, more and more apparent as time goes on....

Labour

20. The widespread unrest in the Post and Telegraph services, already referred to, has spread to the clerks of mercantile firms and banks in Calcutta. Their demands include higher grades of pay, a bonus, better leave facilities, etc. The employees of certain banks, including the Imperial Bank of India, are expected to go on strike from 1st August if their demands are not fulfilled in the meantime.

21. The Press Employees' Association have decided to serve a strike notice on about twenty printing presses, demanding the introduction of grade pay.

22. A general feeling of unrest among tea garden labour in the district of Jalpaiguri is reported, though up to date strikes have been confined to two tea gardens, on one of which labour made an organised attempt to cut off the garden from the outside world and to sabotage the factory arrangements: their efforts were, however, frustrated by the arrival of the police.

23. Negotiations at Burnpur between the Indian Iron and Steel Company and the union have reached a critical stage. In case of failure of the negotiations, the union concerned in the negotiation is expected to ask the workers to go on strike by the end of the first week of August.

24. There were a few strikes of a minor nature involving a few hundred workers in each. The strikes in the Fort Gloster Jute Mills and the Bengal Immunity Co have ended. The lockout at the Metal Box Co is continuing.

31. Impact of Strikes Uneven in the Punjab

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for the Punjab for the second half of July 1946. File No. 18/7/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Labour

The postal strike continues with a suggestion of political influence and interference creeping in. The strike is partial with the towns affected in varying degree and the rural offices hardly at all. It has, nevertheless, caused public inconvenience, particularly to businessmen, and this will increase if Telegraph employees join in, which seems likely. In Amritsar and Lahore strikes in factories and mills have been settled which has resulted in a surface improvement. But the strike fever is still in epidemic form, and is affecting most low paid employees whether of Government or private concerns. Strike threats have recently been voiced by teachers, workers of electric supply companies, municipal employees, staff of the Imperial Bank, Military Accounts clerks, Overseers, Patwaris, and Peons and others. In railway affairs the Communist, Mirza Mohd Ibrahim, continues to show determination not to permit labour to settle down. The situation in general can only be described as being unsatisfactory and of a kind which provides fertile ground for the seeds of further trouble.

32. Communists Spread Strike Fever in the Central Provinces and Berar

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for the Central Provinces for the second half of July 1946. File No. 18/7/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Labour

An epidemic of strike fever seems to be spreading throughout the province from which no class of employees appears to be exempt; sweepers, school boys, school masters, mill hands, bidi workers, lac workers, clerks, even Government chaprasis are all thinking of striking; some have threatened and a few have actually gone on strike, long or short. The case of postmen has been very infectious.

The Communists who are at present without a political platform in the province are desperately trying to secure one and are busy exploiting the present unsettled conditions to

spread discontent and promote strikes. The latest is the chaprasis of all Government offices in Nagpur held a meeting in the Secretariat compound which was attended by 300 men.

33. Police and Postal Strikes Affect Life in Assam

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Assam for the second half of July 1946. File No. 18/7/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Labour

The strike in the Posts and Telegraph Department has been virtually complete since the 22nd July, and offices throughout Assam have been closed for non-Government business, though a skeleton service has been maintained at Shillong and some other places at the Telephone Exchanges. Picketing occurred sporadically at Shillong, Sylhet and Gauhati, stimulated—it is believed—by chagrin at the incorrect statements made on the AIR and in Calcutta newspapers that there was no strike in Assam. Courier services have been established for conveyance of the Government mails, which have now been taken over by the Army Postal Courier Service, but there is still a serious and inexplicable failure of mails from Calcutta. The staff of the Director, Posts and Telegraphs, withdrew a strike notice on it being pointed out that their Shillong allowance of 30 per cent on pay might be jeopardised. Heyday is being made of the disturbed conditions by Communists and Socialists, who have taken on rather too many commitments at one time. The staff of the Imperial Bank decided to strike on the 1st August, and strike notices are pending in the Government Press, the Commercial Carrying and Union Motor Transport Companies operating on the roads to Shillong, and the Assam-Bengal Cement Company. A Union has been formed at Digboi which is considering strike action, and a sweepers' strike took place at Dibrugarh at a most inconvenient moment in view of the danger to public health caused by the floods, but this was quickly settled by negotiation. Ministerial officers indulged in a sympathetic half-hour's strike at Shillong and threaten further action unless their demands are settled satisfactorily before the end of July. On the other hand, so far attempts to induce a strike among the Municipal sweepers at Shillong and the Hydro-Electric Company's staff have not succeeded. Meanwhile the cup of sorrows for the public is growing full, as conditions grow steadily more chaotic. The attitude of the official Congress Party has not been helpful inasmuch as Congress men are showing sympathy for the strikers. Mr F.A. Ahmed, member of the All-India Congress Working Committee, himself presided over the meeting of the Commercial Carrying and Union Motor Transport Companies' staff and is said to have expressed sympathy with the proposed strikers. A communal aspect was given to the strike mania at Lumding, where Muslim League Union men armed with lathis offered to rescue the principal Railway Liaison Officer when he was surrounded by workers of the Bengal and Assam Railway Workers' Union in the course of an argument about victimisation.

Law and Order

Unrest is reported among the Police subordinate ranks, though the strike at Dhubri has been settled by firm but tactful action, a large number of the men being allowed to resign, two prosecuted and two placed under disciplinary proceedings. Apprehension is felt lest the reduction made in the emergency bonus of the Inspectors and Sub-Inspectors, which has not been restored in the above mentioned announcement, should lead to discontent and disloyalty among these ranks, as this would inevitably affect the morale of the whole force.

34. Jawaharlal Nehru's Cautious Criticism of Strike Wave

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Delhi for the second half of July 1946. File No. 18/7/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Political

... There are at least some signs that some of the Congress leaders are realising the danger of the present strike fever which prevails all over India and which until now the Congress, as well as the Communists, has encouraged. Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru during a recent speech in Delhi remarked that frequent strikes were not a healthy sign to the general progress of the country, and therefore, they should be discouraged and stopped. But nevertheless, he has sympathised with the strikers involved in specific strikes, e.g., the Postal strike.

3.A.viii August

1. Delhi Choked with Garbage during Sweepers' Strike

Extracts from a news report, 'Armed police guard town hall from demonstrators'. *Hindustan Times*, 2 August 1946.

Over 3000 municipal workers, including about 1500 sweepers, who have been on strike for the last four days, were prevented by armed police from staging a demonstration in front of the Town Hall on Thursday morning while the Delhi Municipal Committee was in session. The Town Hall, which has been the target of mob fury twice during the last four years and the major part of which is still unfit for use, was strongly guarded by police and teargas squads.

The strikers continued shouting slogans at a distance of about 200 yards from the Town Hall, and scavenging contractors and others failed to persuade some sweepers belonging to the Delhi Improvement Trust, who have been brought in lorries to the Town Hall, to take the place of strikers. They said they were afraid of being excommunicated by their *biradaries*.

The striking sweepers later held a meeting in the Gandhi Grounds at which speeches were made demanding the release of their leaders.

Batches of sweepers went about in the city throwing garbage in the middle of the roads and calling upon sweepers working in private houses to join the strike.

Sanitary conditions in the city have further deteriorated. Drains have been choked with garbage and night soil in many places resulting in streets being flooded with sullage water....

2. Golden Rock Strikers Intimidate Blacklegs

Extracts from a letter by T.A. Varghese, Collector, Trichinopoly, to S.V. Ramamurti, Chief Secretary, Government of Madras; Trichinopoly, 3 August 1946. File No. 2040; Public (General) Department, Government of Madras (1946); Tamil Nadu State Archives.

Trichinopoly, 3-8-1946.

Dear Mr Ramamurti,

... The situation in Golden Rock is still under control, but continues to be dangerous. About 3 to 5 thousand people including women and children are sitting on either side of the pathway

referred to by me in para 3 of my report of 1-8-46. They have not so far used physical violence to any appreciable extent on workers who wanted to go into the workshops. They are jeering, shouting and abusing loyal workers and officers who proceed to the workshops. Occasionally some of them are also spitting at those who are making use of the pathway. If they have not actually started using violence, it is largely because of my personal presence on the spot. If by any chance I happen to be away from the spot either in the morning when loyal workers get in or in the afternoon when the loyal workers get out there is the likelihood of violence spreading out and the situation getting temporarily out of control. I cannot call this "peaceful picketing". It is nothing short of intimidation.

2. As I had feared, out of the 1000 loyal workers who attended the workshops on 1-8-46, only 100 turned out the next day. They are mostly foremen, maistries and other superior establishments. I do not feel confident that in the face of the present form of picketing many loyal workers will attend the workshops. The strikers have realized that they have won their point which is to prevent work of any kind going on in the workshops.

3. The District Superintendent of Police and myself anxiously considered the possibility of affording substantial police protection to workers going into the workshops. I am very definitely of opinion that it will not be possible to do this without provoking a violent outburst. One stone thrown at a police constable will start a series of actions which will in a few seconds necessitate a lathi charge. This lathi charge is bound to be a fierce one and may also necessitate the opening of fire. In view of Government's telegram I would certainly have risked even this, but I do not expect that the situation will ease down without serious repercussions elsewhere. I see determination in the eyes of the strikers. They are giving out that if once force is used on them, they may resort to incendiarism and hooliganism on running trains on the main lines.

T.A. Varghese.
3/8/46.

3. Bombay Postmen to Remain on Strike

Extracts from a news report, 'Bombay postmen to stay on strike'. *Hindustan Times*, 3 August 1946.

Bombay, August 2. A decision not to call off the 23 day old postal strike tomorrow, as was advised by Mr V.G. Dalvi, General Secretary of the All India Postmen and Lower Grade Staff Unions, was taken at a stormy meeting of the Bombay Postmen and Lower Grade Staff Union at Jinnah Hall tonight. Mr V.G. Dalvi presided.

The Bombay Postal and Lower Grade Staff Union will meet on Sunday to take a final decision in the matter. It is stated that at the meeting there was opposition to the calling off of the strike on the ground that all the demands had not been met, particularly in the matter of payment of wages for the strike period....

4. Madras Provincial TUC Calls for Sympathy Strikes with Postmen

Extracts from an article, 'One lakh workers down tools in Madras'. *People's Age*, 4 August 1946.

The biggest strike ever, the biggest common procession ever, the biggest common meeting ever! That was the record of Madras workers on July 23 in support of the postal strike.

About 30 trade unions in the city responded to the call of the Madras Provincial Trade Union Congress to come out in sympathy and support of the postal staff. Congressmen, Communists and non-party trade unionists gave the common call. And one lakh workers responded....

5. Diary of Strikes in Calcutta

Article, 'First fortnight of postal strike in Calcutta'. *People's Age*, 4 August 1946.

"The General Strike called for today by the General Council of the Bengal Committee of the All India Trade Union Congress (BPTUC), in sympathy with the Posts and Telegraphs strikers has affected almost every aspect of the city's life. Tram and bus services are not working today. Most of the city's newspapers offices were closed." (Press message, July 29).

With all its efforts to tone down this news the agency could not kill the truth. And no wonder, the story of Calcutta's postal strike and of her citizen's great support to this strike have written a new and glorious chapter in our common struggle, a chapter that cannot be effaced.

There was the same attempt at repression and disruption, the same lies and attempts at blacklegging on the part of the bosses. The same failure dogged their footsteps, the same rousing popular support to strikers faced them! As in Bombay, as in Delhi, as in other cities, so in Calcutta.

Here are a few glimpses of Calcutta during the first fortnight of this great strike.

July 11

Abdul Momin, General Secretary of the Bengal Provincial Trade Union Congress (BPTUC), has issued a statement calling for popular pressure on the Government to concede the demands of the postal staff.

Ninety-seven per cent of the postal and lower grade staff are on strike. Attempt was made to use army personnel at the GPO but a batch of them refused to work and left shouting "Jai Hind". News of strike[s] from Dacca, Narayanguj, Shillong, Chittagong, etc.

The same threats by the PMG [postmaster General] to call off the strike in 72 hours or else....

Amal Bagchi, Secretary of the Ex-Servicemen's League, warns ex-servicemen against the tempting offers of the Employment Exchange for blacklegs.

July 12

Strike—100 per cent successful. Even the three Muslim peons of the Postmaster, Presidency Division, join in.

The PMG is out for appeals to the strikers' leaders—"please allow the ration shop staff to work." Request granted. Request No. 2 to "allow clerks to stamp letters," turned down.

The President of the AITUC (12 days ago he advised against strike) condemns Government's callousness and its attempts to break the strike.

July 13-14

Strike spreading, Chinsura, Hooghly, Barrackpore, etc. Upper Grade clerks in the AI Postal and RMS Union unanimously decide for strike on July 29.

July 15

Big meeting at University Hall, where leaders of the AITUC, the All India Kisan Sabha, the Students' Federation, leaders of the All India Telegraph Union, Telegraph Workers Union,

Postal and RMS Union, etc., support the strike. Fazlul Huq and Deben Mukerjee (Hindu Sabha) also support it.

July 17

Telegraph and Telephone workers, Postal and RMS clerks and strikers form a joint Council of Action, M.K. Bose, President, AITUC, presiding. Notice of strike sent by wire.

Panic in Lal Bazar—Calcutta banks' business reduced by 50 per cent, all links with their branches severed. The Stock Exchange and Chambers of Commerce injitters. Publishers' business reduced by 3/4th. One publisher says, "Don't worry about that, let the postmen win."

The Employment Exchange's efforts to enlist ex-servicemen smashed.

Telegraph authorities refuse to book telegram sent by Swadhinta (Communist Party's Bengal daily) to its Shillong correspondent, asking for postal strike news. They dub it as "objectionable".

Sympathetic "pen-down strike" for 15 minutes by clerks of the Dy Accountant General of P&T. Indian Seamen's Union, Bengal Miners' Union, Lipton Workers, Dacca students, support the strike.

July 18

"Council of Action" unanimously condemns Chamanlal's stand which is being fully used by the Government to fight the strike. All affiliated units decide to break away from the Federation.

Bengal Pottery, paint workers, rubber workers, etc., support the strike. Bhowani Sen on behalf of Communist Party appeals for support to the strike.

July 19

No blackleg, even for a yet higher price (Rs 6 per day). The President of the local Anglo-Indian Association asks his community men not to go in as blacklegs.

Electric supply workers support the strike.

July 20

Meeting of 200 telephone girls decides on strike. High Government officers reported to be rushing from New Delhi to "win over" strike leaders.

M.K. Bose bluntly exposes a whisper[ing] campaign that Chaman Lal's anti-strike statements were being issued in consultation with himself.

The directors of Indian Telegraph Association repudiate Noronha, their secretary and Chaman Lal. So does Employees' Association of the PMG's office.

July 21

A big day. Ex-servicemen picket the Employment Exchange. At Comilla the Dist Magistrate ordered a railway guard to remove government mail. He even threatened him, but the guard refused.

Police forced to use their own road service.

Meeting of twenty thousand at Wellington Square. Leaders of a number of workers' and students' organisations address. Annada Bhattacharya (of the Students' Federation) offers students' help to collect Mushti Bhiksha (morsel collection) for strike relief. Tramwaymen through Misir, donate Rs 50; bus and motor workers through Barin Bannerjee, pay Rs 25. Wild cheers for fraternal solidarity.

At 12 midnight telephone operators of the Burra Bazaar, Calcutta, Park Exchange, go on strike. So does the staff of the Central Telegraph Office.

Reuters, the never-failing Reuters, ceases sending messages outside.

July 22

Calcutta cut off from the world for 24 hours. The Share Market indefinitely closed. Banks doing only local business. Commerce held up for want of revenue stamps. ICI [Imperial Chemical Industries] business falls by Rs 50,000 in just a day. The Bengal Chamber of Commerce gets only 20 telephone calls instead of the usual 700. Publication of the Reserve Bank's Weekly Bulletin held up.

At Howrah Station coolies refuse to handle mail bags. The Indian Telegraph Union (so far antistrike) decides on strike which means 18 radio centres will be affected. The Alipore Observatory handicapped for lack of outstation reports; that affects ships and air services.

Government officer exposed as lying when he said 50 per cent of the telephones worked. Only 13 out of 700 operators are at work at Calcutta's four main exchanges.

From Howrah mail trains left without mail vans.

July 23

In the last two days alone, according to the Calcutta Bank Clearing House, business fell by a crore of rupees.

Bengali and Anglo-Indian girl operators jointly picket the telephone exchanges. It has been decided by the Union to furnish a few operators for answering calls for hospital, ambulance and fire brigade services.

The Employment Exchange completely failed to supply any blacklegs.

Strikers collected Rs 5000 from house to house collections.

Empty mail vans again from Howrah and Sealdah stations.

Phanindra Panday, Police Constable No. 3504, sent to barracks for refusing to do postal work at the GPO on July 11.

Mass meetings by the Communist Party and labour unions at Shradhdhanand Park, another at Howrah. Also a meeting held by the Revolutionary Socialist Party.

Abul Hashem, Secretary of the Bengal Muslim League, supports the demands of strikers.

The B&A Railroad Workers' Union, Kancharapara Branch, and the Motor Transport Union, Baranagore, support the postmen.

Reports of strikes and meetings from all over Bengal, Jessore, Faridpore, Rajshahi, Midnapore, Burdwan, Nadia, etc.

The All India Radio announces complete suspension of mails to Bengal and Assam.

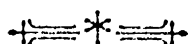
July 24

Krishna Prasada trying to bring pressure on postal leaders. No success for him.

The BPTUC's General Council meets tomorrow, 25th, to decide on general strike.

In fraternal solidarity, some postmen today join the all-party demonstration for release of political prisoners.

This is Calcutta.



6. M.K. Gandhi's Advice to Strikers

Extracts from a news report, 'Strikers must submit to Arbitration'. *Free Press Journal*, 5 August 1946.

Poona, August 4. ... In the present case, we have National Provincial Governments. Postmen should consult these Governments before resorting to the extreme step. So far as I am aware Shri Balasaheb Kher, Shri Mangaldas Pakwasa and Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel have interviewed [intervened]. If their advice has been rejected by the men, they have taken a serious and dangerous step. If all these powerful unions disregard their own Governments and the Working Committee Members, they disown the Congress. They have a right to do, if the Congress sells their interest.

Sympathetic strikes must be taboo until it is conclusively proved that the affected men have exhausted all the legitimate means at their disposal and until the Congress has been proved to have betrayed or neglected their interest or until the Congress has called for sympathetic strikes in order to secure justice from obdurate and unsympathetic authorities.

One hears of strikes all over the country to paralyse the Government. This paralysis is an extreme political step, open only to a body like the Congress, not even to unions, however powerful they may be. If the Congress is the People's arm par excellence for the purpose of winning independence, paralysing action should be retained solely in the hands of the Congress.

At the present moment, the Congress is engaged in making a success of the proposed Constituent Assembly. There are interminable difficulties in the way. Paralysing strikes must seriously hamper Congress action.

It follows from the foregoing that political strikes must be treated on their own merits and must never be mixed with or related to economic strikes. Political strikes have a definite place in nonviolent action. They are never taken up haphazard[ly]. They must be open, never led by goondaism. They are calculated never to lead to violence.

Therefore, my humble suggestion to all strikers is to make a frank declaration of submission to arbitration or adjudication, to seek the guidance of the Congress and abide by its advice and for all sympathetic strikes to stop, whilst the Congress is engaged in making the contemplated Constituent Assembly a success....

7. Imperial Bank Staff Continue Strike

News report, 'Imperial Bank strike continues'. *Free Press Journal*, 6 August 1946.

Calcutta, August 5. The strike of Imperial Bank of India employees continues. Intense picketing was resorted to at the gates of the head office of the Bank by the strikers. Banking business in the city was heavily affected by the strike and clearing house transactions yesterday totalled about seven crores of rupees in value against the normal of nearly eleven and a half crores.

Conditions for the settlement of the strike of the Imperial Bank employees (Bengal circle) called by the Bank's Indian Staff Association were discussed at a meeting of the representatives, Bank and of the Association, convened by the Bengal Minister for Labour Mr Shamsuddin Ahmed. Later, the Council of Action of the Association after five hours' discussion decided to refer the conditions for settlement to a general meeting of the employees to be held on August 5.

Lahore: The strikers of the Imperial Bank of India local office picketed the main road leading to the Bank premises in order to persuade loyal employees to stay away.

The strike which is still partial continued for the third day. Out of a total of 150 employees about 110 are on strike.

8. Strikers Begin to Trickle Back to Work at Golden Rock

Letter by T.A. Varghese, Collector, Trichinopoly, to S.V. Ramamurti, Chief Secretary, Government of Madras; Trichinopoly, 8 August 1946. File No. 2040; Public (General) Department, Government of Madras (1946); Tamil Nadu State Archives.

*Trichinopoly,
8.8.1946.*

Dear Mr Ramamurti,

I am glad to report a distinct improvement in the strike situation at Golden Rock. From 5-8-46 the District Superintendent of Police has been giving elaborate bundobust to loyal workers who wanted to get into the workshops. On Monday 1200 workers attended the workshops. On Tuesday the number increased to 1600 and on Wednesday to 1800. Wednesday's figure included all workers of the loyal unions and about 100 workers of the union of the strikers. We noticed signs of demoralisation amongst the ranks of the strikers who had realized that they could no longer prevent loyal workers from getting in by intimidation.

2. Seeing that the pendulum [pendulum] had begun to swing in our favour we decided to force the issue one step further. On the long perimeter wall of the workshops there are four gates at distances of 2 to 3 furlongs from one another. Yesterday evening (7-8-46) we decided that from today onwards three out of the four gates should be kept open for the use of the loyal workers who had till now only the use of the central gate. I also sent for the labour union leaders yesterday and told them that from this morning only peaceful picketing strictly within the definition of the Premiers' announcement would be allowed. I warned them that the slightest departure from this definition would be prohibited if necessary by the use of force against them. We also decided to regulate the numerous Communist processions and meetings which were being held in various parts of Golden Rock and Trichinopoly town by bringing into force Section 30 of the Police Act....

4. From a mood of total defiance of lawful authority, I think we have at last succeeded in wearing them out step by step into one of recognition of authority....

T.A. Varghese.
8/8/46.

9. All India Trade Union Congress *versus* Indian Federation of Labour

Extracts from a letter by M.K. Bose, President, to N.M. Joshi, General Secretary, All India Trade Union Congress; Bombay, 8 August 1946. File No. 9; All India Trade Union Congress Papers (1946); Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

*Bombay,
8th August 1946.*

My dear Mr Joshi,

I am awfully busy here for work in connection with the numerous labour organisations that have been coming into existence. You will be surprised to learn that I have been offered presidentship of about 200 labour unions. Of course it is not physically possible for me to respond to this call. With three or four exceptions I had to decline the offer but promised advice and guidance. You will have from this some idea of the popularity that the AITUC has gained. The hartal in Calcutta on the 29th July, the like of which the country has never seen, was organised by the BPTUC. You will be glad to learn that, unlike previous hartals organised by the Congress, it was completely non-violent. We had no volunteers on the road to stop traffic nor did we place road blocks nor there was any stone throwing in any single case. Yet mine was the only private car with the notices pasted on the window screen, "President AITUC" and "Chairman, Council of Action" that was on the move in the Calcutta streets. Some four or five lakhs of people of all political parties and creeds assembled at the maidan in a rally the like of which Calcutta had never seen. As I said in my presidential speech, the vision of United India had been revealed to us for the first time....

Pardon me when I say that I do not believe in verbal protests to the Govt for which I have not the least respect. The Govt's policy in inflating the importance of the IFL in international bodies is easily understood. But I believe the time is past when we could attach any importance to the tactics of the Govt. Our appeal today must be to our masters the workers. In the Calcutta hartal there was no sign of the existence of the IFL. We are having everyday in Calcutta and elsewhere mass meetings of workers but the IFL has not been visible anywhere. The working-class of today is dominated by the AITUC. The IFL does not come anywhere near the picture. It exists in Government files and in the files of the ILO. Personally speaking, I can rest prepared, directly or indirectly, to lend support to the pretensions of the IFL and its patron, the Govt of India. The General Council may arrive at any decision but I cannot allow my self to be associated with the IFL in any capacity.

Now that the postal strike is over, normal correspondence is restored. Kindly let me know your reaction on the statement I have issued on the calling off of the postal strike and the general labour upheaval in the country.

Yours sincerely,
Mrinal Kanti Bose.

11. Industrial Unrest, According to Labour Department, GOI

News report, 'An estimate of the strike wave in Bombay'. *Free Press Journal*, 9 August 1946.

Bombay, Thursday. One hundred and sixty-one industrial disputes involving 1,05,251 workers, is the toll taken by what is described as the "widespread industrial unrest," in India during the first five postwar months, writes an Associated Press of India correspondent.

The total loss of working hours due to strike and lock-outs during these five months—August, September, October, November and December last year was 6,12,398.

The toll taken by industrial disputes during the first seven months of 1946, for which accurate figures are not available, is estimated to be nearly three times the figures quoted above. And this does not include the latest and the biggest of the recent strikes—the postal and telegraph strike.

During the past six months, strikes in textile mills have resulted in a total loss of over seven hundred million yards of cloth, thus enhancing the cloth shortage in the country.

The Reason

"The cause of this widespread industrial unrest lies in the high cost of living and the steadily and rapidly growing demand of the industrial workers for a better standard of living," said a Labour Department official of the Government of India, in Bombay commenting on the recent wave of strikes.

The cost of living in almost all the industrial cities of India at present is about two and a half times the figure that obtained before the war. In Nagpur and Jubbulpore, the living cost during recent months has been higher than in Bombay.

"The outcome of inflation is invariably a tug-of-war between the employer and the employee the former trying his utmost to make the largest margin of profit out of the vast amount of money in circulation, and the latter doing his utmost to combat inflationary prices by trying to secure higher incomes" the official said.

Labour's Strength

He added, "But the present unrest is not solely the result of inflationary prices. A contributory cause is the growing consciousness of the industrial worker in the strength of organised labour, which has given rise to prolonged strikes on such trivial incidents like the engaging of a labour welfare officer whom the workers do not approve of."—API.

12. South Indian Railway Labour Union Leaflet

An undated (probably 10 August 1946) translation of a Tamil leaflet issued by South Indian Railway Labour Union, Golden Rock Branch. File No. 2040; Public (General) Department, Government of Madras (1946); Tamil Nadu State Archives.

Golden Rock Struggle

15th day

Deceiving propaganda of the Administration.

Do not cheat us by showing scarecrows of the Maize Fields.

Who are those dishonoured persons who were escorted like criminals by the Police through the gates used by Paton and his dog?

Reynolds! Do not think that the workers are afraid of your scarecrows.

How long do you think you can grant succour to your Chelas with the Help of the IG of Police, other big Police Officials and the MSP.

Do you know who those 900 who were taken into "heaven" yesterday were?

Do not think that the courageous workers will relinquish their struggle because you held a procession with Police Zulum of Ryots, Rowdis [rowdies], CID men, retired men and about 300 blacklegs?

Kanganis! Do you know about the false unions and their executive—where are Quisling, Mihlovitch [Mihailsrich], John Amery, Mussolini and Haw Haw today? On the Hangman's platform.

There is no pardon for traitors. The workers will not forget. Stand firm and do not worry about blacklegs. They are not engaged in work in the workshops but in music, and Paton's

lectures. What can the lame, the blind, the rowdis [rowdies] and the diseased do? Without you the shop work cannot go on. Do not become a prey to Police incitement.

Stand firm. Fight vigourously.

Ismail Khan (President).

T.N. Parameswara Nair (Secretary).

SI Rly Labour Union, Golden Rock Branch.

13. Abdul Bari's Rough Methods at Jamshedpur

Extracts from a letter by Jawaharlal Nehru to Jayaprakash Narayan; Wardha, 10 August 1946. File No. 160; All India Trade Union Congress Papers (1946); Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

Wardha,

August 10, 1946.

My dear Jaya Prakash,

Mukutdhari Singh has given me your letter and has also shown me some other papers. The story you unfold is almost incredible. Indeed if you had not written it I would have found some difficulty in believing it. I know Abdul Bari's fold. I know also that his methods are rough and tough. Still there is a limit even to roughness and what you write passes that limit. Jamshedpur has long been notorious for the violence and rough methods of labour workers. Homi excelled in this and then came Bari who opposed him and beat him at his own game. Certainly I shall look into this matter and do what I can. You are perfectly right in telling your people not to retaliate in kind. For the present I am writing to Bari and I shall pursue this matter further....

Yours affectionately,
Jawaharlal.

14. 3 Lakhs Attend Rally in Calcutta

Extracts from an article, 'Unprecedented rally of over 3 lakhs in Calcutta'. *People's Age*, 11 August 1946.

The TUC had given the call for a rally under the Ochterlony monument. From all corners of the city, processions started in the morning—processions in which the workers and the bhadralogs mingled in one solid phalanx—Hindus and Muslims men and women, Communists and Forward Blocists, Bengalis and Hindustanis....

15. 16 Lakhs Participate in the 29 July Strike in Calcutta

Article, 'Biggest ever hartal in our national movement'. *People's Age*, 11 August 1946.

Twenty-ninth of July!—About this day a Calcutta paper has written, "The city ever since its foundation by Job Charnock, saw something which it had never seen before." The General Secretary of the Bengal Trade Union Congress (TUC) called it "a definite landmark in the annals of the working-class movement in our country."

But it was a day the like of which you and I had read before in books but had never seen with our own eyes.

It was a strike which by the numbers participating in it has broken all records. From Hooghly Point to Diamond Harbour, over 16 lakhs of people, workers and babus, took part. And this despite the fact that the Trade Union Congress had exempted railway, water works and also electric workers from it. If the hartal as a whole is considered, then the number of those responding to the call—including shopkeepers, students, teachers, along with workers—would come to over 40 lakhs. It was complete stoppage of Calcutta's life.

Four days ago when the Bengal TUC came out with a call for a one day general strike to register Bengal's support for the heroic strikers in the Posts and Telegraphs Department, none—not even the sponsors—had any idea that the response would be so terrific. Many of us thought in terms of our usual hartals, our elders talked of the great boycott hartal during the Prince of Wales' visit twenty-five years ago, when even the sahib's *khidmatgars* had not come for work.

There were others who were afraid there would be disorders-raids, firings and truck-burnings. The President of the Bengal Congress had appealed the night before for "strict non-violence". The police had made its own preparations for "law and order," and armed trucks and jeeps were kept loaded "standing by for action".

Toiling Man's Response

But the toiling man—whether he is a mazdoor in the jute factory, a conductor in the tramways, a durwan in the Writers' Building or a clerk across the bank counter—needs no sermon on non-violence nor is he frightened by the brandishing of the tommygun. All his life he has run the factory or the office with clocklike precision, and today when he came to the maidan he amazed the whole city with his strength and discipline.

Early in the morning—before the first shift begins—we reached Metiaburz, one of the most crowded industrial pockets in Calcutta's suburbs. The roads were filled with workers, but today there were no blacklegs: Birla's Kesoram Textile Mills and the Clive Jute Mills, the Lever Brothers Soap Factory had already been shut as none had gone in. At the Garden Reach works, the factory siren blew twice, but the workers joked that none would obey it today.

On the way to Kidderpore, we passed the King George's Dock. At every gate, volunteers stood, and inside it was all empty, the lights were off, the giant cranes stood still, it was all like a deserted hive.

The BNR offices were all empty and so were the Port Commissioner's docks.

As we entered, Kidderpore, a long procession of thousands of Indian seamen, led by their own band, turned up. And shops on both sides were closed.

Ten o'clock in Dalhousie Square and Clive Street—the centre of official Calcutta—are the busiest areas in India but today where had all the clerks, stenos and peons gone? Such a thing the burrasahibs had never seen in their lives. The 'babu' whom the sahib has always pitied and patted—even he has not turned up!

And not only the babu, even the chaprasi and the liftman had not come. The sahib was not furious, his face did not turn red with anger as it happens so often: he was scared and his face turned white with fear as it had never happened before.

Sahib's Way Barred

We found a crowd in front of the Writers' Building. At the main entrance, there lay on the pavement, students—both Hindus and Muslims—barring the entry of the big ICS bosses.

Five months ago, on Rashid Ali day, these bosses had barred their way into Dalhousie Square, today it was the other way round!

The police made several lathi charges, but the students would not budge.

Soon, Mr Walker, Chief Secretary to the Bengal Government, came and—as all Chief Secretaries have done before him—he walked in over the bodies of Indians, both Hindus and Muslims. But inside, he found none—not even his closest associates.

There were Indians too of Mr Walker's mettle: at the Calcutta Port Commissioners' Office, Anil Sen Gupta, son of the great Dashpriya J.M. Sen Gupta and of Mrs Nellie Sen Gupta, (Congress MLA), repeated the same performance twice, wounding five pickets.

Girls Picket AIR

But the incident that roused the anger of all took place in front of the All India Radio station. There the girl students had started picketing from early morning: when they approached the Assistant Station Director, Prabhat Mukherji, to cease work, he replied without shame: "To us the motto of obeying the sarkar is as great as the motto of obeying the call of the country for you. To flout that motto is something that hurts our conscience!"

And the way he with a bunch of his type and saved their conscience was to sing songs and crack obscene jokes at the girls.

Soon after, the Station Director, Mr Chib, came and pushed one of the girls: and the police too were called for.

The sergeants and armed police arrived in a jeep and tried to break through the girl pickets; they were hesitating when Mr Chib and Prabhat waved to them to rush in.

Sergeants' Violence

The girls threw themselves on the ground; a sergeant trampled on Parvati's arm; Sashti Sanyal of the People's Theatre held back the sergeant who then began to beat him. At once, Gita Mitra, Suprava Roy, Gita Mukherji pounced upon him; the sergeant then hit Suprava in the stomach and kicked her as she fell on the ground. Gita Mitra with unbelievable courage tore off the sergeant's collar.

The Indian sepoy kept quiet all the time. As the girls were having the scuffle, the jeep pushed through into the station, wounding Dipi Dey and other girls. And all this took place with Chib and Prabhat looking on.

A huge crowd soon collected there. They would have torn Chib, Prabhat and the sergeants to pieces, but for the intervention of the girls and the volunteers. As soon as Niranjana Sen appealed to the crowd not to get provoked, they responded—in a remarkably disciplined manner though one could see the intense hatred and anger writ large on their faces.

As we came along the whole crowd was praising the heroism of the girls, who kept up the picketing.

For three hours, the Control Room in Calcutta Station did not function that morning and no artiste turned up throughout the day. Chib and Prabhat had to play gramophone records to fill in the programme hours.

We went along to the High Court: here too, as in other Calcutta Courts, work had to be suspended. All the offices in the neighbourhood had their shutters down.

The Assembly Chambers, next door, were locked. It had been unanimously decided on the previous day to cancel its sitting today in view of the general strike.

Cinemas Closed

Along Chowringhee, the cinemas were closed, for the operators had not come. The Grand Hotel was marked 'closed' though armed police were kept in front, which provocatively chased the peaceful crowd more than once, and stones were pelted on the street from the upper floors.

The New Market was completely closed, even the fruit and fish vendors who keep open on Sundays, did not come.

In the Muslim areas of Wellesley Square and Park Circus, all the shops—even the bidi shops—were closed.

College Street was deserted: schools and colleges had all closed, the University had declared a holiday on account of the Vidyasagar anniversary!

Further north, the same spectacle of a Calcutta-on-leave could be seen everywhere. Not even a rickshaw could be seen on the streets.

And in the jute areas of Alambazar and Barrackpore, the mills just did not work. Some of the factories in Howrah, as also the Oriental Gas Co, had declared a holiday.

No Newspapers

All Calcutta's newspapers remained closed on account of the general strike. The *Statesman* not relishing the idea of a strike had declared a holiday on account of the King's Birthday, which had passed off many weeks before. The Muslim daily *Morning News* did not declare a holiday, but its staff kept away from office.

The day saw the welling up of a new life too in Calcutta's humanity. It was not a mere negative cease-work protest. The lakhs who downed tools and pens, came out to demonstrate their anger against the Government that is not only holding up the just demands of the Post, Telegraph, RMS and Telephone workers, but keeping us under bondage that can no longer be tolerated.

15. Government of the United Provinces' Labour Policy

Extracts from an article, 'UP Congress government enunciates labour policy'. All the extract marks shown below have been reproduced from the article. *People's Age*, 11 August 1946.

Dr Katju, the Labour Minister of the UP Congress Government, has at last issued a Press note, long overdue, enunciating his government's Labour policy.

The note begins with an expression of every sympathy for workers. It promises that "medical facilities will be expanded and steps will be taken at least in selected areas in the Province to promote legislation for sickness."

It also talks of "profit sharing schemes", "social insurance against risks" of various kinds. But then as every capitalist does, it trots out arguments to show that nothing can be done for them in practice: labour is an all-India question; industry has to face competition from abroad, and even from Indian States, where labour is so cheap.

Thus there is not one word in this document regarding the basic problem of wages, about reduction in the hours of work even though the Central Government has authorised Provincial Governments to enforce a 42-hour week if they so desire.

The Press Note then goes on to say: "Government must condemn any strike ... if this weapon is intended to be used as a means for dictating terms or much worse, for the furtherance of political ends or doctrines...."

"As the law stands at present, lightning strikes are wholly illegal.... Lightning strikes such as may endanger public health will not be tolerated."

"There is a complaint made sometimes not without justification that a vocal minority among the workers seeks to impose its will on the majority consciously or unconsciously."

Again nothing but the old, old homily on the baneful effects of strikes—which our imperialist masters have always used and which the National Movement has always fought.

In fact, it is clear that the main concern of the Press note is to devise methods to curb the present working-class upsurge and deprive the workers of the only weapon they have—Strike.

Finally here is the Magna Carta of the blacklegs and their masters.

"The right to work or not to work is one of the elementary civil liberties which must be assured to every citizen.... Those who want to work are entitled to protection and must be protected...."

"Those who ... want to work will be protected from all illegal molestation, violence or threats of violence...."

16. Bombay's Women Support Bank Strikers

Extracts from a report, 'National Bank strike'. *People's Age*, 11 August 1946.

The strike of 350 clerks and peons of the British owned National Bank of India in Bombay spotlighted a new fraternal spirit in the middle-class when some of the women's organisations in the city offered to help them combat blacklegging by outside women clerks....

17. 5000 Come Out at Golden Rock for Reinstatement of Dismissed Colleagues

Extracts from a report, '5000 Golden Rock workers on strike'. *People's Age*, 11 August 1946.

... Five thousand men of the Golden Rock workshop are on strike from July 23 for reinstatement of their comrades who were dismissed for carrying on Trade Union work....

18. 40,000 Military Accounts Clerks to Go on Strike

Extracts from an report, '40,000 Military Accounts clerks to go on strike'. *People's Age*, 11 August 1946.

Military Accounts clerks, numbering about 40,000 and employed at strategic centres all over the country, will go on strike from August 15, if the Government refuse to grant their just demands....



19. Vallabhbhai Patel's Role in Ending the Postal Strike

Extracts from an article, 'Postmen could have secured better terms'. *People's Age*, 11 August 1946.

After fighting the first all-India strike for 25 days, at most of the centres the postmen, etc., have resumed work.

The men have returned to work because a settlement was reached between Dalvi, their leader, and Krishna Prasada on behalf of the Government. They 'settled' it because leaders like Sardar Patel intervened and talked about the strikers losing public sympathies, if they did not call it off.

On the merits of the case, the men could not be said to have won a big victory, particularly in view of their tremendous and growing solidarity—of Hindus and Muslims, of Pathans and Madrasis, of Bengalees and Maharashtrians—and the staggering support our people gave to their battle.

Their unity was all the more praiseworthy in view of the Government's playing up [to] the disruptive 'nationalist' leaders of the Federation against them; leaders who were simultaneously backed by Congress leaders, and given widest publicity by the Press.

Their battle was all the more praiseworthy because with countless 'Unions' and 'Associations' in the field, and with their own organisation not at all experienced in even a local strike, they fought for 25 days an all-India strike battle against the entire might of the Caretaker bosses who at ever step rattled their sabres. They fought because their cause was just and people's support behind them overwhelming.

Total Relief Secured

The total relief that they have secured up to now, in stages, amounts to Rs 3.96 crores. As a result of the notice of strike in February 1946, they got concessions amounting to Rs 1.42 crores. By mid July, the Rajadhyaksh Award gave them concessions worth Rs 1.82 crores (including Rs 73 lakh for nonrecurring relief). To bring about a settlement the Government granted them further relief "amounting roughly to Rs 1 crore."

Was this really satisfactory to this "lowest paid employee of the Central Government?" In rejecting the Rajadhyaksh Award as "unsatisfactory", Dalvi, the leader of the strikers, had said that the "relief it granted was about 6 per cent of the cost of the demands." The subsequent relief is much less than that. How then does it satisfy?

Why then could not better terms be secured? The answer is, under pressure from the business world, Sardar Patel forced an unfair settlement on the strikers. Big Business was crashing collapsing. In Calcutta alone in two days bank business dropped down by rupees one crore. Ministers were flooded with their telegrams 'to end it'. And it was 'ended!'

Sardar Patel brought the pressure of the entire Congress leadership to bear, not on the Government, but on Dalvi, the workers' leader. Threats were given to "withdraw the strike or face its smashup." The nation's leaders, went [sent] forth the warning, would issue statements against it, Volunteers' would be sent to break it. In the absence of the Strike Committee, Dalvi yielded....



20. Stationmasters Join Workers in Golden Rock Strike

Extracts from a copy of report by V. Natesan, Superintendent of Police, Special Branch, CID, forwarded to the Chief Secretary, Government of Madras; Madras 13 August 1946. File No. 2040; Public (General) Department, Government of Madras (1946); Tamil Nadu State Archives.

Madras
13.8.1946

Strike Daily Bulletin No. 7 dated 13.8.46

1. The situation at the Golden Rock Workshops remains the same. Loyal workers turned up for work and there was no picketing.

2. At a meeting of the Executive Committee of the Station Masters' Association held on 11.8.46 C.V. Nair, its General Secretary, issued a strike notice on the General Manager stating that the members of the Association will also go on strike sympathising with the Labour Union. It is however, reported that several station masters are against this move and also not likely to go on strike as they feel that C.V. Nair has entered into an unholy association with Sri K.S. Nambiar, and that this would be detrimental to their interests. They also doubt the legality of the strike as no ballot was taken....

4. Labour Union Red Volunteers who are moving about from place to place on propaganda, are also collecting funds from passengers in trains, enlisting public sympathy by criticising the Congress Ministry in helping the Administration.

5. On 12.8.46 the Chief Commissioner for Railways, the Financial Adviser to the Railway Board and the General Manager, SIR, interviewed the Premier at Trichinopoly. The Premier also granted interviews to the representatives of the Labour Union. It is significant that Sri K.A. Nambiyar and M. Kalyanasundaram managed to be absent from Trichinopoly when the Premier visited the place. The local subordinate leaders of the Labour Union who interviewed the Premier were told to draw up their minimum demands and to meet him (Premier) at Madras on 14th Aug. 46. Sri K.A. Nambiar who returned to Trichinopoly this morning is likely to proceed to Madras for this interview tomorrow.

6. Sri K.A. Nambiar has apparently succeeded in persuading the LT Association, Erode also to join the strike. An unconfirmed report shows that this association has also decided to issue a strike notice....

V. Natesan.
Superintendent of Police,
SB, ID.

21. Engine Drivers and Firemen Join Golden Rock Strike

Copy of a report by the District Superintendent of Police, Trichinopoly, forwarded to the Chief Secretary, Government of Madras, by the Inspector General of Police, Madras; 13 August 1946. File No. 2040; Public (General) Department, Government of Madras (1946); Tamil Nadu State Archives.

Situation Report From 8 to 13-8-46

After the cessation of picketing by strikers from 8-8-46 morning the situation in Golden Rock has remained the same. There was very gradual increase of loyal workers up to Saturday 10-8-46, on which date in addition to about 400 clerical and supervisory staff, 1567 labourers were reported to have entered the shops. There was practically no increase in numbers on 12th and 13th.

2. A 14 days notice of strike was served on the administration on 12-8-46 on behalf of the Station Masters' Association. This move appears to have originated from the Association Secretary who is a supporter of K.A. Nambiar. He is said to have a following of about 50 per cent among the Station Masters. This is understood to be centred around Vriddachalam and Villupuram. Indications are however that Station Masters who will strike will be those on the chord line which is most likely to be affected. It is understood that about 10 per cent of the Station Masters have assured the General Manager that they will work on. The President and Vice-President of the Station Masters Association are understood to have called for an urgent executive committee meeting to question the validity of the strike notice.

3. It is understood that 73 drivers and 73 firemen stationed at Villupuram have signed a declaration supporting the strike. It is also thought that the Loco and Transport sheds at Villupuram may be affected.

4. During his visit to Trichinopoly on 12-8-46 the Prime Minister saw local strike leaders in the absence of Nambiar and Kalyanasundaram who appear to have left Trichinopoly deliberately just before his arrival. It is understood that the leaders were instructed to draw up a list of their minimum demands and again meet the Prime Minister in Madras on 14-8-46. Nambiar returned to Trichinopoly on 13-8-46 morning and has announced his intention of going into Madras tomorrow. The General Manager also left for Madras last night.

5. The general impression among the leaders which is reflected among their followers is that they are not likely to get assistance from the Prime Minister. The morale of the strikers, in view of the frequent inexplicable absences of their leaders in the past few days, has remained unexpectedly steady.

6. Police patrols and pickets continue as before. It is understood that 3 Communist agitators from Madras are being deputed to assist the Labour Union. Starred Suspect Jeevanandam has arrived in Trichinopoly. Propaganda is likely to be intensified.

Illegible,
for Inspector-General of Police.

22. Congress Working Committee on Hindustan Mazdoor Sevak Sangh

Copy of resolution passed by the Working Committee, Indian National Congress; Wardha, 13 August 1946. File No. 123; Jayaprakash Narayan Papers (1946); Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

Whereas the Congress has to play an increasingly active role in helping the working-class to organise itself on sound and healthy lines, to achieve its rightful place in industry and society and to make a progressive contribution towards raising the economic and social standards in this country, the Committee have come to the conclusion that a central agency should be provided to encourage, support and coordinate the efforts and activities of Congressmen in the field of Labour Organisation and the service of the working-class. The Committee note with satisfaction that the Hindustan Mazdoor Sevak Sangh has been functioning in this field for a number of years, and has built up a policy, tradition and machinery well calculated to advance and fulfil the aims which the Congress has in view in relation to labour. The Committee recommend to Congressmen to make the fullest use of the facilities provided by the Sangh for the service of the working-class, and to accept its guidance in dealing with labour questions.

In order to give effect to the above resolution a Committee consisting of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, Lala Gulzarilal Nanda and P.H. Patwardhan be appointed to confer with the Hindustan Mazdoor Sevak Sangh and report to the Working Committee.

23. Bengal Steel Workers Go on Strike

News report, '11,000 Bengal steel workers on strike'. *Free Press Journal*, 14 August 1946.

Calcutta, August 13. Workers of the Indian Iron and Steel Company, Steel Corporation of Bengal and Standard Wagon Company at Burnpur went on strike this morning, following the expiry of their strike notice.

About 11,000 men are affected by the strike.

Notice of the strike was given on July 30, and expired today. Negotiations for a settlement failed, the terms offered by the management being rejected by the Union.—API.

24. A Large Number of Minor Strikes in Madras Province

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Madras Province for the first half of August 1946. *Public (General) Department*, Government of Madras (1946); Tamil Nadu State Archives.

Labour

The strike fever continued and there was a large number of minor strikes, but the fortnight was dominated by the threat of a general strike in the South Indian Railway. Scheduled to start on the 15th of this month, the strike has since been postponed to the 24th. The Chief Commissioner of Railways who was in Madras had discussions with the Government, and the Prime Minister also visited Trichinopoly, the headquarters of the South Indian Railway and met some of the labour leaders. Every effort is being made to effect a compromise and to avert the strike, but the Communists, at whose instance the strike is being organised, are spoiling for a fight. It is

significant that the Tamil Nad Provincial Congress Committee at its recent session passed a resolution disapproving of the strike.

The Madras Corporation Labour Union (Communist-controlled) launched on a strike on 13-8-1946 and over 2000 sweepers and scavengers are involved. The main demand is for a considerable increase in wages. The Andhra Provincial Municipal and Local Boards Employees Union, Bezwada (also a Communist Body) has organised a strike of public health menials like scavengers and sweepers which has now spread to most of the towns of the Andhra districts. Government have issued a communique advising the workers not to strike pending the result of conciliation by a special board. There is evidence that the workers by themselves might have been amenable for a compromise, but the sinister role played by the Communists has ruled out the possibility of settlement. Wherever the strike of scavengers and sweepers has spread, efforts have been made to engage substitute labour or employ voluntary workers in the performance of these essential services.

About 2700 workers of the Mecnakshi Mills, Madura, left work without proper notice on 2-8-1946 demanding the introduction of three eight hour shifts with an interval of half an hour per shift. The Commissioner of Labour contacted the two unions of workers of the Mill but was unable to effect a settlement. The management have reopened the mills on 14-8-1946 and it is reported that about two-thirds of the workers have returned to duty.

Trouble appears to be brewing in Scindia's Shipbuilding Yard at Vizagapatnam. Here again the Communists are in the picture as the instigators of a strike. Mr Bisvananda Das (Ex-Premier of Orissa) addressed some of the workers on 3-8-1946 and Prof. Ranga a few days later both of them deprecating the strike, but at a ballot taken on 6-8-46, 2200 of the 2500 workers voted for a strike. Negotiations, however, are still in progress.

25. Lathi Charges on Picketing Strikers

Extracts from a column of despatches from different cities, 'Police use lathis freely against strikers'. *Free Press Journal*, 16 August 1946.

Calcutta, August 15. Students, including girls, who are picketing the premises of the Head Office of the Imperial Bank of India, Calcutta, were lathi charged today by the police, for the second time in two days.

It is said that the lathi charge took place, when the picketers surged towards some officers of the Bank, both Indian and European, as they tried to enter the Bank premises. During the lathi charge, two students and one Indian officer were injured.

Picketing continued throughout the day.

The Students' Federation in Calcutta have appealed to the All India Trade Union Congress to declare a general strike on August 17 as a protest against the police attack on the students on Wednesday.

Twenty-six persons, including nine women, were injured in front of the Central Office of the Imperial Bank of India this morning when European and Indian officers trying to enter the Bank for work were picketed, according to a statement by the Bank's Indian Staff Association.

The statement says that several police vans packed with armed sergeants and police encircled peaceful pickets squatting in front of the Bank gates and forcibly tried to disperse them, resulting in injuries. Some European and Anglo-Indian officers of the Bank forced their entrance into the Bank "trampling over peaceful pickets".

Lathi Charge on Madras Sweepers

Madras. The sweepers' strike in the city, on its third day today resulted in mild lathi charges by the police and a few arrests.

In the Elephant Gate area, a crowd collected in front of the Corporation refuse lorry shed, and attempted to hold back lorries from being taken out. The police arrested eight strikers, and dispersed the crowd with a mild lathi charge. The demonstrators then marched to the police station in procession, demanding the release of the arrested persons.

The police had once again to resort to a lathi charge to disperse the crowd. A few persons were injured, including a woman.

The situation is otherwise peaceful.

The Corporation Commissioner has today notified the workers, that unless they return to work by tomorrow, their services will be terminated.

One Police Inspector was injured being hit by stones pelted by the people at Elephant Gate this morning. He was treated as an outpatient in the General Hospital.

In Triplicane, a large number of women sweepers on strike assembled in front of the Corporation lorry shed with brooms in their hands and blocked the way. The police dispersed them with a mild lathi charge.

Bezwada Scavengers Lathi Charged

Bezwada. Police made a mild lathi charge this morning when some of the scavengers, who are on strike, blocked the entrance to the municipal office, with a view to preventing the municipal refuse lorries and vehicles from being taken out.

The municipal health authorities with the help of the public and available scavengers are maintaining the essential services under police protection.

Rice mill workers are today observing a sympathetic strike.

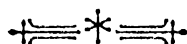
26. Threat of General Strike on South Indian Railway

Extracts from copy of a report dated 17 August 1946 by the District Superintendent of Police, Trichinopoly, to the Inspector General of Police, Madras, and forwarded by the latter to the Chief Secretary, Government of Madras. File No. 2040; Public (General) Department, Government of Madras (1946); Tamil Nadu State Archives.

Situation Report From 13 to 17-8-1946

6. The Labour union finally decided on 13-8-1946 that the General Strike on the South India Railway should commence on the 24th midnight. On that day about 700 propagandists were sent out to tour the line. The Workers' Union also sent out counter-propagandists on the same date.

7. The general feeling among the strikers is one of confidence that Nambiar will negotiate successfully and obtain concessions. I do not think that the majority of strikers really expect the general strike to materialise nor will they welcome it if it does.



27. Public Warned Not to Risk Railway Journeys During Strike

Extracts from copy of a report by V. Natesan, Superintendent of Police, Special Branch, CID, forwarded to the Chief Secretary, Government of Madras; Madras 20 August 1946. File No. 2040; Public (General) Department, Government of Madras (1946); Tamil Nadu State Archives.

Daily Bulletin No. 13, 20th August 1946

The situation at Central Workshops, Golden Rock, remains the same except that the attendance has been increasing....

8. P. Ramamurthy speaking at Madura on 18-8-46 said that every Police Station is recruiting blacklegs and warned the public that inexperienced men will be employed to run the rolling stocks which are old and rickety and that therefore it was dangerous for the public to travel in trains during the strike period.

9. B.T. Randive, one of the Communist members of the Communist Party of India of Bombay has arrived in Madras and has programmed to visit Madura on the 21st. Instructions have been issued to all the local branches of the Communist Party to mobilise Kisan Sabhas and Labour Unions and local Railway workers to meet him en route at important stations to express their support for the strike. They have been asked to present purses for the strike fund and make Hundi collections for the purpose.

10. Wall posters have been exhibited at important railway stations denouncing the act of the Premier and advising the public not to risk railway journeys from the 24th....

V. Natesai.
Superintendent of Police,
Special Branch, CID.

28. Public Inquiry Demanded into Killing of an Old Woman by Police

Leaflet issued by the Madras Committee, Communist Party of India; Madras, 21 August 1946. File No. 2695; Public (General) Department, Government of Madras (1946); Tamil Nadu State Archives.

Police Terror to Break City Corporation Workers' Strike Citizens Protest Against Murder

Citizens of Madras,

Yesterday the Malabar Special Police entered a Corporation cheri in Saidapet and let loose terror on the poor worker families. Men, women and children about 150 in all, were indiscriminately beaten up, many heads broken, and their huts and all their belongings ravaged.

A 70 year old woman worker was murdered in cold blood, she succumbed to her injuries within a few hours.

Yesterday's murder has come as the culmination of one week's police terror on the poor unarmed Corporation workers to break their strike. Within this time over 300 workers have been wounded and over 150 arrested.

Citizens, the seventy year old untouchable woman worker was murdered by the Police because the poor Corporation workers, 10,000 of them who are paid today the starving wages of Rs 7 a month dared to strike for a wage of rupees thirty-five a month.

Citizens, are you going to allow murder of an old striker woman to take place under a Congress Ministry? You, the general public, put the Congress Ministry in power to protect the interests of the poor and to fight the British Raj. Are you going to allow that very ministry to let the police and the bureaucracy beat up, terrorise and murder your own brothers and sisters for the crime of refusing to starve on rupees seven a month? Today they have murdered a woman, an old woman striker; if you don't lift your voice in time, tomorrow it will be your own sisters and brothers whose turn will come next.

Citizens, in the name of that heroic 70 year old untouchable woman martyr, raise up your voice and demand of the Congress Ministry that police terror in Madras city shall stop. Demand of Congress Ministry that they immediately withdraw the police and the Malabar Special Police; and they restore to the workers the right to strike which the Congress Election Manifesto has promised all. Demand that a public non-official enquiry be immediately set up into the conduct of the police and Malabar Special Police in the Corporation workers strike and the culprits given the punishment they deserve.

Communist Party of India,
Madras Committee.
21.8.46.

29. Programme of Strike Action on South Indian Railway

Extracts from copy of a report dated 22 August 1946 by the District Superintendent of Police, Trichinopoly, to the Inspector General of Police, Madras, and forwarded by the latter to the Chief Secretary, Government of Madras. File No. 2040; Public (General) Department, Government of Madras (1546); Tamil Nadu State Archives.

Situation Report From 17 to 22-8-1946

1. The general situation in Golden Rock Workshops remains the same. On 21-8-46 p.m. 1504 labourers were at work. The total of all categories including clerks and temporary labourers was 2686. Up-to-date during the week 46 strikers returned to duty but there have been some defection; amongst strikers who had previously returned. Up-to-date 420 temporary labourers have been employed. It is estimated that 3312 labourers are still on strike....

5. The following programme is understood to have been chalked out by the Communists leaders:

- | | |
|------------------|---|
| 24-8-46 morning: | Picketing by individual women—dissuading workers going for work. |
| 26-8-46 day: | Picketing every Ry station and office in the most effective manner possible as also the workshop. |
| 27-8-46 | Defying law and courting arrest if necessary. |
| 28-8-46 | Sympathetic strike by all labour organisations. |
| 29-8-46 | Peaceful picketing in batches of five at all stations and at all platforms. |
| 30-8-46 | SI Railwayman's Day to be celebrated by all public institutions in the Presidency. |
| 31-8-46 | Strike in all Railway by AIRF |

Latest information however is that the Union has been enlisting outsiders of both sexes of the hooligan type with a view to revive intimidation by picketing on the 24th.

6. It is likely that strikes of all Communist organised labour including scavengers, tannery workers, beedi workers, hackney carriage drivers, mill workers, motor transport drivers in Trichinopoly and Srirangam, scavengers in Karur and mill workers and scavengers in Manapparai will be arranged to synchronise with the Railway strike.

7. It is understood that the Railway administration intends to prosecute some of the strikers in certain essential services such as the Fire Brigade, Power House, Watch & Ward and sweepers. It is also understood that the administration proposes to withdraw recognition of the Labour Union. No official intimation of this has yet been received.

8. Propaganda by the administration and loyal workers has been continued but has not been very effective.

30. Porters, Pointsman, Gangmen and Gatekeepers to Join SIR Strikers

Extracts from copy of a report by V. Natesari, Superintendent of Police, Special Branch, CID, forwarded to the Chief Secretary, Government of Madras; Madras, 20 August 1946, File No. 2040; Public (General) Department, Government of Madras (1946); Tamil Nadu State Archives.

Daily Bulletin No. 17, Dated 25th August 1946

There was no appreciable change in the strike situation at Golden Rock on 23-8-1946.

2. It can be assumed that most of the gangmen, gatekeepers, a large number of loco coolies, coal coolies, pointsman and other menials are likely to join the strike. The propaganda against the strike by the Railway Administration continues.

At midnight of 24-8-46 the strike commenced. At Madura all menials, and most of the loco workers stopped away. Three Station Masters, a guard and some clerks belonging to the Labour Union also struck work. Picketing at houses of loyal workers may be arranged by the strikers.

Almost all the menials in the Shoranur-Calicut section have struck work, a few stations are completely closed while Station Masters of a few more are alone working. The situation is quiet so far.

V. Natesan.
Superintendent of Police,
SB, CID.

31. An Unprecedented Strike Wave in Bihar

Article, 'Workers' upsurge in Bihar'. *People's Age*, 25 August 1946.

[Below] I give a chart of the strikes which have rocked Bihar in the form of an unprecedented postwar upsurge of industrial workers.

Strike-wave Industry-wise.	No. of workers	Days	Leadership	Result
1. TEXTILE	involved			
Gaya	1,400	52	CPI & CSP	Appointment of Arbitration Board.
Gaya	1,400	10	CPI	{No announcement
Phulwari Sharif (Patna)	600	70	CPI & RDP	Strike continuing.
2. ENGINEERING				
Electric Shop (Dalmianagar)	300	2	CSP	Won Adjudication
Tinplate (Jamshedpur)	3,500	20	CPI & Prof Bari	(No judgement yet)
Telco (Jamshedpur)	1,300	8	CPI & pro- Congress workers	Won
3. COAL				
Coal Mines (Giridih)	1,000	2	CPI	Won
	12,000	1	CPI	Won
4. MICA				
Giridih	4,000	2	CPI	Won
Giridih	3,000	1	CPI	Won
5. JUTE				
Katihar	8,000	2	CPI	Partial Victory
Kalihar	8,000	10	CPI	Partial Victory
6. LEATHER				
Bataguije (Patna)	1,000	5	CPI	Won
7. CEMENT				
Kelari (Ranchi)	1,000	10	CPI	Adjudication
8. BIRI				
Patna	1,500	46	CPI	Won
Monghyr	600	3	CPI	Won
9. SHELLAC				
Balarampur (Manbhum)	5,000	3	CPI	Partial Victory
10. TOBACCO FACTORY				
Monghyr	3,200	5	CPI & Congress	Won
	(75 p.c. slow down strike)			
11. PRESS				
Bhagalpur	100	7	CPI	Won
Monghyr	100	6	FB	Won
12. FLOUR & OIL MILLS				
Bhagalpur	500	6	CPI	Arbitration
Patna City	300	4	CSP	Partial Victory
Bukar	400	6	CSP	Partial Victory
13. SILK FACTORY & THREADBALL				
Bhagalpur	300	18	CPI	Strike continuing
Bhagalpur	200	18	CPI	Strike continuing
14. SHOP-ASSISTANTS				
Gaya	1,500	15	CPI	Won

(Contd.)

... (Contd.)

Strike-wave Industry-wise	No. of workers	Days	Leadership	Result
15. RICKSHAW (Muzaffarpur, Patna, Gaya)	6,000	3	CSP & spontaneous workers	Won
16. COOLIES, CAR DRIVERS TOLEDARS Barh	1,000	8	Pro-Congress elements & T. Paramanand	Won
17. SCAVENGERS Bettiah & other places	2,000	2	Workers	Won
18. CHINA CLAY Singhbhum	1,500	6	Workers	Won
19. STAFF (CLERICAL, ETC.) Dalmianagar	700	1		Won

By the month of May the number of workers involved in these strikes had reached 50,000. In July it stood at 60,000. The number of workdays lost amounted at over 5,00,000.

This does not include either the number of workers who participated in the mammoth postal strike or the number of days lost due to it.

As would be evident from the chart, the strikes were directed mainly against [the] ration cut and retrenchment, and for increment in the basic wages, dearness allowance, and for bonus. In two cases the workers hit back against police zulum.

Out of the 32 big strikes that took place in this period, 25 (involving some 52,000 workers) were led by the Bihar Committee of the Communist Party of India, 17 exclusively by the Party, and eight jointly with other groups. Four (involving 1700 workers) were led by the CSP, one (100 Press workers in Monghyr) by the Forward Bloc; and the remaining two (involving about 3500) were conducted by the workers themselves.

Role of CSP and Other Left Groups

The role played by the Congress Socialist Party and some other Left groups during these strikes is not very glorious.

For instance, when a strike took place in the cotton mill at Gaya, the local CSP leader asked the workers to "go back to their villages". As soon as the workers had turned their backs, the leader "accepted the advice" of the Labour Minister and unconditionally withdrew the strike.

Similar "advice" to "return home" was tendered to the textile workers of Phulwari Sharif. The result was that the workers went away to their villages, the employers declared a lockout and now the workers are starving! The Congress Ministry is, of course, sitting tight over the whole thing.

It was exactly the same in Dalmia Nagar strike.

Another Congress Socialist leader, one Shyam Barthawar, in order to sabotage the Communist-led strike of the shop assistants in Gaya actually asked the shop owner seths to go on a counter-strike! (Funny as it may sound, the fat bellied sethias of Gaya did go on a strike! But in two day's time the poor things got out of breath, retraced their ill-advised steps and accepted the demands of the workers).

Muslim League Tries Disruption

Following on the tactics of these leaders, in some places like Bihar Sharif and Monghyr, the Muslim League also is trying to exploit the backwardness of the workers, and organise rival communal unions! They too have not succeeded much, but the danger exists.

Out of the 32 strikes mentioned above, in 15 the workers have scored complete victories and in 14 they have won their demands partially.

These results have helped their understanding, the consequence of which is that among the workers there is a rush to join their genuine unions and among the unions there is a rush to get themselves affiliated to the All India Trade Union Congress.

32. Military Accounts Clerks Strike

Article, 'Military Accounts clerks down pens'. *People's Age*, 25 August 1946.

The clerk from the Military Accounts Department is on strike. He has followed where his brothers in the RIN, RIAF led, where the post and telegraph boys led. Yet another Government employee has defied Service Regulations and Defence of India Rules to strike, strike at a callous imperialism Government.

In the third week of July these clerks framed their demands. In the first week of August the Military Accountant General (MAG) bluntly told them, "None of your demands would be accepted by the Government." The Press reported it as "a failure of negotiations". But the clerk; all over the country knew that the gauntlet had been thrown. They accepted the challenge. The strike is on. It will be on till the bureaucracy bends down.

Why have the 'Caretakers' chosen to force yet another nationwide strike on their employee within less than 10 days after sustaining a big defeat in one?

Against Retrenchment

The first demand of the clerks is that there should be no retrenchment. Months ago the railwaymen faced retrenchment of 30 per cent of their staff. They threatened strike and forced the Government to stay off the offensive, pending decision of the Pay Commission.

The Military clerks are facing retrenchment of 70 per cent of their staff. Out of 35,000 who man this temporary war service, 25,555 will soon be on the streets. All that they had asked for, these military clerks, was that their "services should be counted as war service," so that they might be assured of some alternate employment.

The army bosses' reply was that the "Government had not yet made up their mind on what would be the likely strength of the army in the near future." Hence no assurance could be given about retaining them in service or finding them alternative jobs!

Worse still fifty per cent of the permanent posts will be reserved for personnel discharged from the army! Twenty-five per cent will be reserved for those who pass the Federal Public Service Examinations!

As for their service conditions a graduate clerk starts on Rs 62, a matriculate on Rs 50 per month. Like other Government services, they are divided into A, B and C areas with the usual invidious distinctions of service conditions against which the postmen fought and the railwaymen are fighting.

For More Pay

What the clerks demand is a starting wage of Rs 125 for graduate clerks and Rs 75 for the matriculates with suitable grades for the other staff like stenographers, etc. A Government which could increase its defence budget considerably during the war, did not feel [the] slightest shame in insisting on paying the same prewar wage to its clerks, one year after the war.

There are also other demands for bonus, for war gratuity, to insure against a measurable period of unemployment after discharge (a right claimed by all other employed on war service), no victimisation, etc.

The shocking part of it is that the clerks who on war service do all war jobs, are subject to all war dangers and war regulations, are yet not entitled to a single war benefit. They were needed in war. So they were employed. Now the war is over. So they are to be thrown on imperialism's scrap heap. And they are expected not to protest. As if to add insult to injury, thousands of them serving in the Demobilisation Depots, have been for the last so many months, made to work overtime. "Your daily quota of work must be finished the same day no matter how long you have to work," is their order. Result is they slave for 10 to 12 hours a day, slave even on Sundays and holidays. Overtime or extra wages—no such benefit for them. They must tamely work on.

Strike Widespread

Against all these hardships, but above all against the "scandalously sweeping retrenchment" the clerks are on strike. They are simultaneously on strike at such far-flung places as Calcutta and Rawalpindi, Lucknow and Jubbulpore, Ferozepore and Patna. Aurangabad and Deolali, Jalna and Allahabad, etc.

On July 27 they met at Jubbulpore in the Central Provinces. Representatives of 20,000 clerk offered their terms to their army bosses. "Concede our demands within 15 days or else tin employees will have no other alternative than to resort to direct action," read their ultimatum.

Of course, earlier the All India Federation of Military Accounts Union (AIFMAU)—the national organisation of these clerks—had suggested how the retrenchment could be easily avoided by adapting the additional 32 war factories (the peacetime factories were only eight) to produce for civilian needs. But as in the case of Railwaymen, Federation the suggestions were turned down as a "matter of policy".

This is why the clerks are today on strike!

They have joined the battle in the full consciousness that they are up against an unscrupulous enemy. The lies and falsehoods that he resorted to crush the postal strike are too fresh and too mean to be forgotten. But they also know he is perfidious.

At Lucknow

In their recent strike a month ago at Lucknow these same clerks had forced their boss, the Field Controller of Military Accounts at Ambala, to reinstate the men he had arbitrarily discharged and withdraw the charge sheets against most of the rest.

Even the MAG later assured them that "there would be no retrenchment for eight more months." When despite the assurance, retrenchment did take place, and very soon, and the clerk asked him to keep his word, he coolly replied that his assurance only applied to Military Account and not to Field Accounts (though he is the boss of both)!

Already efforts are being made to disrupt the ranks in the name of religion. But as in the case of railwaymen and postmen such attempts cannot succeed.

As I interviewed two members of the General Council of the AIFMAU, they said, "We are prepared for quite a long battle. When they could protract for 23 days a strike in so essential service like post and telegraph, we shall be underrating our enemy if we expect him to concede a quick victory. But we know our growing unity is bound to lead to victory.

"Only two days ago at Poona, we held a meeting of our clerks. They had so far not been in the Federation. But in one meeting alone, we enrolled 1500 members.

"What the MAG forgets is, we are clerks of 1946. We have seen our people backing up the RIF the RIAF and shedding their blood for them. We have seen them supporting railwaymen; we have been thrilled by their glorious support to postmen.

"We also are a part of our people and on any count we are fighting a just cause. Are we not entitled to the same support from them?"

Yes, they are. And they shall win.

33. Madras Corporation Workers Fight Repression

Extracts from an article, '10,000 Madras Corporation workers on strike'. *People's Age*, 25 August 1946.

About 10,000 workers of the Madras Corporation are on strike since Aug. 13. They came out together. They are fighting also together, under the common Red flag, despite the ten so-called Municipal Employees' Unions in the field, despite the savage police terror under a Congress Ministry, despite the Ministry promulgating the hated Criminal Tribes Act in the city (demanding of the 500 scavengers of the Kurave community daily reporting to the police station), despite the Ministry and the Corporation trying to employ blacklegs at Rs 10 per day!...

34. General Strike on South Indian Railway

Extracts from a news report, 'South Indian Railway general strike'. *Hindustan Times*, 25 August 1946.

Madras, August 24. Except for one passenger train that left this morning for Mayavaram, the entire train service, both on the broad and metre gauges, of the South Indian Railway has come to a standstill following the strike by the railway employees.

The general strike began at midnight today (August 24-25)....

35. Police Open Fire on Strikers in Madras Province

Copy of a bulletin by the Inspector General of Police, Madras, forwarded to the Chief Secretary, Government of Madras; Madras, 26 August 1946. File No. 2040; Public (General) Department, Government of Madras (1946); Tamil Nadu State Archives. *Daily Flash Bulletin*—26.8.1946—09.00 hours

Madura

Less than 50 per cent of the Railway staff are on strike at Madura. Stray instances of intimidation near the houses of loyal workers were reported on 25.8.1946.

On 25.8.1946 at 16.10 hours police pickets in Madura City were stoned by Communist labourers. Two constables sustained injuries. Three rounds were fired by the Police and one

known casualty was removed to the hospital. An aggressive mob of women was dispersed by the use of tear gas. Two women leaders were arrested. The situation is under control.

Vellore

The drivers and conductors of buses in North Arcot district went on strike from the morning of 25.8.1946 in spite of the efforts of the reconciliation officer to avert the strike. There is however no information that this is connected with the Railway strike. Hooligans obstructed a bus by lying down in front of it. They were forcibly removed and taken into custody. Another bus proceeding to the bus stand was obstructed and its producer gas plant [?] was damaged. Two other buses were obstructed and attempts were made to remove forcibly the loyal drivers. 45 strikers responsible for the obstruction were arrested and taken to the Police Station and on their undertaking to keep the peace they were subsequently released. About 60 buses have stopped plying in North Arcot district. The morale of the strikers is reported to be not very high.

Malabar District

Pattambi, Karakad and Tanur Railway stations have not been affected by the Railway strike and are working. Pallipuram, Kuttipuram, Edakulam, Parappanangadi, Vallikunnu, Kadalundi, Feroke and Kallai Railway stations are completely closed. Tirur station is working partially. The stationmasters of Calicut Railway Station are working but the menials are on strike. One stationmaster of Shoranur is working but the menials are on strike.

M. Krishna Menon.
for Insp. Genl of Police.
26.8.46.

36. South Indian Railway Guards Track Against Sabotage

Extracts from a news report, 'Railway traffic in the South comes to a standstill'. *Free Press Journal*, 26 August 1946.

Madras, August 25. Despite the last minute appeal by Premier Prakasam, to the workers of the South Indian Railway, the projected general strike began punctually at midnight yesterday.

Though the exact pattern and shape of the strike is not known the Free Press of India learnt from an official spokesman of the Railway that there have been attempts at sabotage by the workers. According to a report appearing in a local paper six country-made bombs were found in the tunnel between Aryankavu and Shencottah Stations, where the Railway runs along Travancore State territory.

The South Indian Railway authorities are striving hard to keep the suburban services in Madras running. Armed guards have been posted all along the track. The administration assures that goods train carrying essential foodstuffs will be kept running. They will be carrying mails as well. Precautionary measures have been taken, including running of pilot trains with Railway police and security personnel guarding the permanent way....

37. Aruna Asaf Ali: Railway Strike “Most Inopportune”

Extracts from a news report, ‘Madura women demonstrators clash with police’. *Free Press Journal*, 27 August 1946.

Madras, August 26. The South Indian Railway strike situation remains unchanged. The strike is restricted to subordinate and inferior staff, who are members of the SI Rly. Labour Union.

The movement of essential commodities, including foodstuff is unaffected, says Mr J.F.C. Reynolds, General Manager, SI Rly, in a communique. Thirty-eight goods trains were running on the line yesterday and forty-nine are expected to run today. ..

Tear Gas Against Demonstrators

Tear gas was used by the police in Madura to disperse a mob of women demonstrators and two women were taken into custody, in connection with the South Indian Railway strike, according to reports received by the Government today from the District authorities.

Two constables are stated to have been injured as a result of pelting of stones on police pickets in Madura yesterday. About fifty per cent Masters in Calicut are working as usual.

Two goods trains with essential foodgrains, mails and newspaper packets left Tambaram (Madras) today, to southern centres.

The parcels were taken to Tambaram from Egmore by patrol trains.

Almost all the Stationmasters in the suburban stations are working as usual, and the electric train service is maintained, though on a restricted scale.

As the pointsmen are on strike in several places, guards are doing duty on points.

At Trichinopoly about 200 strikers squatted inside the station premises, to picket clerks attending to general duty. This had, however, no effect on the loyal workers.

Picketing and intimidation of loyal workers are also reported from Tuticorin and some other stations.

Excepting the Stationmasters, drivers and serangs, all other railway employees on the Cochin-Shoranur lines are reported to have stayed away since yesterday.

Mrs Asaf Ali Condemns Strike

Mrs Asaf Ali who is on a tour of South India, characterised the general strike on the South Indian Railway as “most inopportune”, in view of the critical food situation in the country, at a meeting of railway workers at Golden Rock, Trichinopoly.

She suggested to the Labour Union to refer their dispute to the Labour Subcommittee of the All India Congress for settlement—API.

38. White-collar Militancy

News report, ‘White-collar workers on warpath’. *Free Press Journal*, 28 August 1946.

Bombay, Tuesday. The City of Bombay which has given the lead to the rest of India in many matters of national interest is soon to have the unique perhaps world distinction, of having a trade union movement of clerical workers of the city. A start has already been made with the Federation of Bank Employees and Lower Grade Staff to which are affiliated the unions of 35 banks which employ 15,000 persons. If the number of mofussil branches of these banks is taken into consideration the total reaches 600 banking houses with 25,000 employees.

Recently the Federation drew up a Charter of Rights, which demanded for bank employees "the right to decent conditions of life and living and adequate return against work." It is understood, however, that the Union officials will not insist on the acceptance of some of the more Utopian demands, but the Federation is determined not to yield on such fundamental demands as the basic salary of clerks with a start of Rs 75 per month rising up to Rs 300 in 20 years.

Lower Paid Staff

Similarly the Charter has demanded a starting salary of Rs 40 for lower paid employees, such as hamals, sepoy, etc., with a maximum grade of Rs 100 within 20 years. Mr Abid Alijaferbhai, the President of the Federation, and other Union officials are doing their best to avoid a grave crisis that will occur if the bank managements do not accept the employees' demands for the trade and commerce of the City will undoubtedly be paralysed if the respective bank Unions call on their 25,000 members to strike from about the first week of September.

Mr Jaferbhai has revealed that while the managements are willing to come to terms on issues like Provident Fund, bonus and leave rules, it is almost certain that the rock on which negotiations will founder are the major demands for scales of pay, promotions and dearness allowance. Most bank managements, it seems, are willing to concede a grade of Rs 65 to Rs 275 for clerks and Rs 30 to Rs 65 for lower grade staff.

The Reason Why

The tremendous upheavals brought about by the last global war had their repercussions even on the apparently placid backwaters of clerkdom. Large numbers of young men were absorbed in the newly created and ever-expanding wartime departments with their offers of attractive salaries and little work. The rapid industrialisation of the country gave an impetus to technical and scientific studies, which further deflected the flow of educated youth from the countinghouse and mercantile offices. Lastly, the August 1942 movement awakened a new consciousness among the middle-classes.

Increases Cost of Living

The enormous increase in the cost of living, which has increased fourfold since 1939, is an even more potent and material factor for the present wave of unrest; while the lot of the industrious "black coat" has been steadily deteriorating. Whereas, before the war, some of the more thrifty were able to put by a few rupees from pittance, they are now up to the neck in debt. Having exhausted all sources of borrowing including loans against Provident Funds they have in many cases had to sell the ornaments of their women folk and even their brass and copper cooking utensils. There are instances of bank clerks who have had to subsist on a basic pittance of Rs 80 per month after 15 years of service.

The plight of the lower grade staff is even more miserable. Most of them lack even a roof above their heads and it is not uncommon to find peons and sepoy in the clutches of moneylenders, which is hardly surprising when the "havildars" of some banks get the salary of Rs 30 per month after putting in an equal number of years service.

Mill Worker Better Placed

The industrial worker and mill operative is nowadays much better off than the average office worker, due to a large extent to the strength of the trade union movement, which no employer dare face.

The first rumblings of discontent in clerkdom can be traced to the one-day strike of the Bombay Life Insurance employees in 1942, but it was not till October 1945 when there was an 8-day strike in the Bombay Mutual Life Insurance Co that the phenomenon of an entirely new labour problem was acutely felt. The chaotic political situation and the fierce wave of strikes that swept across the country culminating in the RIN strike of February 1946 have reverberated in insurance, banking and commercial houses. The recent and more or less successful strikes of the non-scheduled staff of the BEST, the Indu Mills Group and the Bank of India have driven home to the patient pen-pusher that in union lies strength.

Bank unions have sprung up almost overnight and the need for a still closer affiliation has been realised in the Federation of Bank Employees, which is powerful enough to prevent the convenanted staff of one bank going to the aid of the management of another, where a strike of employees is in progress.

That the echoes of this movement are being felt in all sections of clerkdom is evident from the determination of the employees of Insurance Companies, solicitors' clerks and even of the Industries, Supplies and Allied Offices to form unions and federations of unions. Very soon the movement is bound to spread to the innumerable business houses of the city and trade union officials visualise a very large prouping of federation of clerical employees, numbering over 50,000 in the city of Bombay alone.

In No Mood to Wait

Both the Bombay Government and the Congress have promised to do their best to set right the "tremendous maladjustments" that exist between capital and labour, but the Federation of Bank Unions is in no mood to await that millennium and will very likely go into action within a week. The panic that exists in the Banking World is reflected in the approaches that are being made to the Government of Bombay, but Union officials state that the bank officials do not seem to appreciate the new spirit that has arisen among their employees.

The outcome of the struggle that has been launched against yet another citadel of capitalism will be followed with the keenest interest throughout the country for on its success or failure will depend the prosperity and well-being of hundreds of thousands of clerical workers and lower grade employees.

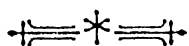
39. South Indian Railway Strike Turns Violent

Extracts from a news report, 'SIR strike takes violent turn'. *Hindustan Times*, 29 August 1946.

Madras, August 28. The South Indian Railway strike which has been peaceful so far has taken a violent turn. Reports of attempts at sabotage have been received from a few centres. Fishplates have been removed and the permanent way has been tampered with. A gang mistry was assaulted and stones were thrown at a goods train.

Approximately 20,000 workers struck work on August 25, it was officially stated today. A few of the strikers have since returned to work in some stations.

Mr K. Anandan Nambiar, MLA (Madras), Secretary of the South Indian Railway Labour Union, was arrested at Coimbatore yesterday....



40. Madras Premier Condemns South Indian Railway Strike

News report, 'Prakasam condemns strike'. *Hindustan Times*, 29 August 1946.

Madras, August 28. Mr T. Prakasam, Prime Minister, Madras in an interview stated that the South Indian Railway strike had not been able to make any headway on account of the absence of sympathy and support of the public.

Mr Prakasam said: "Those who embark on this big strike without heeding the advice given to them have by their action attempted serious breach of peace in different parts of the province. On account of such doings they have been compelling the Government to take drastic steps against offenders however much the Government have been unwilling to have recourse to any action that might savour of repression."—API.

41. The Strike at Pratap Mills, Amalner

Statement by S.G. Brahme, Acting General Secretary, Amalner Girni Kamgar Union; Amalner, 29 August 1946. File No. 78; All India Trade Union Congress Papers (1946); Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

Statement of the Amalner Girni Kamgar Union on the Murderous Firing on Workers on 27-8-46

On behalf of the Amalner Girni Kamgar Union, Amalner, District of East Khandesh, in Bombay Province, I should like to bring to the notice of you all the ghastly tragedy that was enacted in Amalner on the evening of 27th of August by the Police. The incident bears parallel only to those like Jalianwala Bag, Ashti-Chimur and others which have filled a glorious chapter in the history of our great national movement. What has happened here is a grave warning to the Popular Ministry of the ways in which the bureaucracy is going to deal with the people. The Police opened murderous fire without any provocation on a peaceful meeting killing six men on the spot and three in the Hospital immediately after, and wounding about 60 seriously.

Short History of the Struggle

The workers of the Frame Department in the Pratap Mills, Amalner, were on a legal strike since 7th August for demanding reinstatement of Sheklal Nathu, an illegally dismissed worker. After going through all the torturous proceedings of the Bombay Industrial Disputes Act, and when the conciliation proceedings had failed, the workers under the leadership of their union, gave a notice of strike on 23rd July 1946. The copies of the notices were served to all responsible officers of Government.

In the meantime the management started an offensive on workers in the Frame Department. They began to ask workers to do work which they were not entitled to do. The workers refused. Thereupon two workers were summarily discharged under the notorious standing order 19(a) on 25-7-46. When rest of the workers (Bofferboys) of the same department refused to do the work of these dismissed workers, the Frame stopped working. As a result of this, one department after another began closing down.

The workers demanded compensation for this enforced idleness. The management, in order to get out of this complex situation, manufactured some trouble in the engine and closed down the Mill No. 2 for an indefinite time from 30-7-46. This was obviously to forestall [forstall] the workers' strike which was gaining momentum everyday.

Strike Commences

On the 7th August, in the morning, the strike commenced in the Frame department of the other Mill No. 1. The other departments began closing down one after another when on the 8th August evening all the Mill No. 1 was declared closed.

On the 8th evening a procession and a meeting was organised. It passed off peacefully.

On the 8th night, Section 144 was promulgated. The union by its letter and a telegram to the District Magistrate on 9-8-1946 immediately demanded withdrawal of Section 144 as it hampered the democratic right of the workers to mobilise public opinion in support of their demand.

The union sent a letter on 11-8-46 Ref. No. 207/46 to the Minister for Labour and a telegram on 9-8-46 to him informing him about the strike, the engine trouble, demand of withdrawal of Section 144 and also sought his intervention in the strike dispute.

The union also sent a telegram to the Home Minister requesting him to withdraw Section 144 immediately.

The Commissioner of Labour, Bombay, was also informed by a telegram on 9-8-46 and letters on 11-8-46.

On the morning of 4th August, Com V.G. Bhagwat, member of the Managing Committee of the union, and Com Shripat Shrawan Patil, the General Secretary of the union, met the Government Labour Officer, Jalgaon, Mr T.D. Sapre, at Jalgaon. There we showed our willingness for an amicable settlement of [the] dispute. He promised to come down to Amalner on 6th August. He could not come on that day due to [a] railway accident. But it is surprising that he did not turn up during the whole period of dispute—a fact worth noticing. It must be remembered that he usually visits Amalner quite on and often. His inactivity this time lends support to our conclusion that Government deliberately sat quiet [quiet] and allowed the situation to deteriorate.

One of our representatives Com S.G. Bramhe saw the Commissioner of Labour on 8th August and again requested him to intervene.

Then on 13th August, Com V.G. Bhagwat, a representative of our union, again saw the Commissioner of Labour in Bombay and brought to his notice the strike situation and also about the engine trouble about which we directly alleged sabotage on the part of the management and asked for an inquiry. So far as the first was concerned, the Labour Commissioner did not seem to be eager to intervene and hinted on the [at a] trial of strength, while as regard[s] the latter, he expressed Government's inability to intervene, as he said Government had no power to interfere. He suggested [to] us that the union should give a notice of change [charge] alleging sabotage and demanding compensation in which case they [the government] may possibly inquire.

On 17-8-46, the union again sent a letter to the District Magistrate requesting him to withdraw Section 144 in view of the peaceful nature of the strike and there was complete unity among the strikers about the conduct of strike.

On 19-8-46, the union sent telegrams to the Prime Minister, Home Minister, Labour Minister, District Magistrate and the Commissioner of Labour informing [them] about the strike situation, demanding withdrawal of Section 144 and immediate Government intervention in the strike dispute.

On the above date also the union sent letters to the District and Taluka Congress Committees, all Congress MLA's in the district, narrating the whole history of the strike dispute, union's efforts

to settle the dispute amicably, how Government was sitting quiet and also requested them to give support to further steps in the matter the union may take to protect the interest of the workers.

Then on 20th August, a representative of the union, Com V.G. Bhagwat, along with the President of the Bombay Provincial Trade Union Committee of AITUC, Com S.S. Mirajkar, saw Mr S.L. Nanda at Poona and submitted to him a memorandum detailing out the whole history of the relations of the union and the management, the dispute of the strike and the engine trouble. The union made the following demands in the memorandum:

- (a) An immediate inquiry be made in the conduct of the management and their officers to ensure smooth working of the mill.
- (b) An immediate inquiry be made regarding the accident to the main bearing of the engine of Mill No. 2 and the guilty ones punished.
- (c) Full compensation be paid to those who have suffered as a consequence of this deliberate mischief.
- (d) The Government must immediately intervene in the dispute of the strike on the 7th August.
- (e) The mill management be warned against all mischiefs and provocations to the workers either by dismissals, repression or by introduction of new methods of work, etc.

Mr Nanda promised to look into the matter and talk to Mr S.V. Joshi, the Commissioner of Labour. He also referred to a possibility of referring the whole Khandesh trouble to an inquiry committee.

On 21st, Com Bhagwat saw Mr Morarji Desai, the Home Minister. Com Bhagwat pointed out the peaceful nature of the strike and the necessity of withdrawal of Section 144 in order that the union may be able to mobilise popular support. The Minister gave a very curt reply and refused to withdraw Section 144. He strangely said that there was no need for mobilising popular support.

On 22nd August, Com S.S. Mirajkar and V.G. Bhagwat again saw Mr S.V. Joshi and asked him whether he had received any communication from Mr G.L. Nanda in [regarding the] Amalner dispute. He said he had not received any, but also revealed that he was going to Poona on 23rd August to see the Labour Minister and would talk about [the] Amalner situation.

On his return from Poona on 24th August, when Mr S.V. Joshi was contacted on phone by Com S.S. Mirajkar, Mr Joshi replied that [the] Amalner strike dispute was not discussed and only a general inquiry about Khandesh unions and the management was in the offing.

This was extremely surprising and shocking, when in spite of repeated requests, the Labour Minister, the Labour Commissioner refused to budge an inch and intervene in the dispute.

The Situation Worsens

Again on 24th, the union sent an Express letter No. 213/46 urging the Labour Minister to intervene in the dispute immediately.

The President of the Amalner Taluka Congress Committee, on 24th August, published a leaflet and widely distributed it among the workers stating misleading facts and explanation about the dispute of [the] strike, seriously attacking the policy of the Red Flag union, openly supporting the application of Section 144 and the action of the mill management. The District Congress Committee also wrote a letter to the union in the same tone. This among other things naturally led to create great discontent among the working-class.

Again on 26-8-46, the union sent telegrams to the Labour Minister and the Labour Commissioner bringing to their notice the rapidly deteriorating situation and urging Government [‘s] immediate intervention in the dispute.

The temper of the workers was getting exasperated. We need not lay down nor should attempt to remind the Congress Ministry of their own Labour Policy. In their policy statement they have clearly laid down that they would attempt to solve all disputes by amicable means by referring them to adjudication and arbitration and that "in all legal strikes, their sympathy will be with the workers." The silence of the Labour Minister and the Labour Department, their refusal to intervene in the dispute was simply outrageous. The workers were naturally led to believe that the Popular Ministry has turned a deaf ear on them; they saw the sinister hand of the enemies of the working-class, of the Red Flag, behind this game of provocation. They decided to draw the attention of the Government by peacefully breaking the ban on meetings and processions.

Incident on 27th August

Accordingly, [a] 4-5 thousand strong procession was taken out on 27th evening. After going through the city peacefully, it ended in the main bazar Peth. A meeting was to be held there. The meeting was quiet [quite] peaceful and there was absolutely no provocation. There was no stone throwing as is usually put as an excuse for Police Firing.

At the beginning, one of the leader[s], Com N.P. Narawane asked the people to remain quiet and not to fall victim to goonda and Police provocation. When Narawane started speaking, the District Superintendent of Police (who was a British) rushed in and wanted him to discontinue his speech. Com Narawane also assured the DSP that there will be no trouble only if the Police kept quiet. In spite of this, however, the DSP insisted that no speeches be made. Then Com Narawane began to speak. But immediately he was arrested and handled to the Police lorry. Even then the meeting was peaceful. Com Shripat Shrawan Patil, the General Secretary of the union, at once rushed to the platform and advised the workers and others to be clamful [sic] and not to fall a prey to the Police action and peacefully to listen [to] his speech. Just then some Police officer brought to the notice of the DSP that the speaker was the leader of the workers. Immediately Com S.S. Patil was forcibly caught by Police and simultaneously without any warning the murderous firing began. As a result, six workers were dead on the spot and three died immediately after in the Hospital. About 60 workers are injured, one very seriously. Com Shripat Shrawan Patil, the General Secretary, and Com Gangadhar Bhila Patil, the former Vice-President of the union were also killed. Hundreds of workers, women and other citizens who were present on the spot and who were nearer to Com S.S. Patil, said that the DSP shot him (S.S. Patil) with his revolver while Patil was caught by the Police. Seeing his brother shot, Patil's younger brother, Gambhir, rushed to the front for being shot, [he] also was seriously wounded in his both legs. The names of the dead and the injured men have been appended herewith separately.

The union particularly wants to bring to your notice the brutal firing on Shripat Patil. It is a case of deliberate, cold-blooded and calculated murder. It must be remembered that at the end of July 1946, this same Shripat Patil had complained to the Home Minister about the rude behaviour of the DSP Mr R.H. Davies. An inquiry is going on. Naturally the DSP seems to have taken vengeance on Shripat Patil. In his diabolical game, Mahavirsing Jamadar, a notorious drunkard, a most corrupt Police officer seems to have helped him. He pointed out Patil, held him by his hand and within a minute Shripat Patil was shot in the abdomen.

This deliberate murderous fire on a peaceful meeting has no doubt parallels in the Imperialist Raj. But it is unparalleled under the regime of a Popular Government. The local bureaucracy has brought a crying shame on the Popular Ministry by the act of deliberate and planned murder.

We have no words to express our indignation at the atrocious behaviour of the Police. The working-class is seeking [seething] with vengene [vengeance] and will not sit quiet till the wrong is undone. It is true, nothing in the world will bring them back their heroes like Shripat Patil, Gangadhar Patil and others who have become legendry figures. But we expect the Popular Ministry not to allow this gang of murderers to shelter behind them under [the] benign name of law and order.

After 27th of August

It should clearly be noted that the Labour Minister, Labour Commissioner and other officials who had not even once sent any communication to the union to its above-narrated many-sided efforts to settle the dispute amicably, the Commissioner of Labour, Bombay, with the approval of the Labour Minister sent a telegram (reading thus-- refer your wire to the Labour Minister Kindly wire whether prepared to refer the dispute to arbitration) first on their part during the whole period of dispute, which was received by the union office on 28-8-46 at 9-30 a.m. From the telegram, it becomes clear that it was despatched from Bombay (place of origin) on 27-8-46 at 20 hours and 25 minutes, i.e., at 8-25 at night, i.e., Govt came to know about the firing which was resorted to three hours before on the same evening. This clearly goes to show that Govt and Labour [Labour] Department deliberately kept silence in spite of full knowledge about the rapidly deteriorating situation and only showed their readiness to intervene after the firing was resorted to.

On 29-8-46, Mr G.L. Nanda, the Labour Minister and Com S.S. Mirajkar, Vice-President of the AITUC and the President of the Bombay Provincial Trade Union Congress, visited Amalner. On 30-8-46, through the intervention of Mr B.N. Datar, the Assistant Commissioner of Labour, Bombay, an agreement was reached between the union and the management (copy attached). Accordingly the union withdrew the strike notice of the Frame Department and the Mill No. 1 resumed working from 6-9-46. The other Mill No. 2, closed due to deliberate engine trouble, still remains closed.

Police Repression, Arrests, Notices and Warrants

Even [if] the industrial dispute is settled, and there is complete calm and the workers resumed work, the District Magistrate again has extended order under Section 144 by a month from 7-9-46.

Police has started arrests, and up till now they have arrested 12 worker leaders including four women who are released on bail. Com V.A. Kulkarni the Ag. General Secretary and Com Ananda Harchand Patil, the Secretary of the union are among the arrested.

Com Bhagwat, Bhalerao, Bramhe and Chikate (President of the Union) have been served with notices under Sections 107 and 112 CPC. In this way the police are creating such a situation as will create terror among the workers.

Ministry's Refusal to Institute Inquiry

The Bombay worker Leader Com S.A. Dange (Bombay MLA) moved an adjournment motion in the Bombay Legislative Assembly on 5-9-46 demanding impartial and independent inquiry into the firing, suspension of Police officers, and compensation to the victims of firing. But surprisingly enough, the Prime, Home and Labour Minister vehemently defended the Police action ... and refused inquiry.

We Therefore Request You

- (1) to demand an explanation why the Labour Minister refused to intervene in the dispute when it was consistently brought to his notice and why the situation was allowed to deteriorate.
- (2) to demand an inquiry into the conduct of the Magistrate, the DSP for ordering this deliberate brutal firing, by an independent impartial tribunal.
- (3) to demand immediate suspension pending inquiry of the DSP and the Jamadar who have deliberately murdered workers.
- (4) to give compensation to the victims of firing.
- (5) to withdraw cases, warrants, notices, etc., and stop repression [repression], and to also withdraw Section 144.

S.G. Bramhe.
Ag. General Secretary,
Amalner Girni Kamgar Union.

42. Train Services Restricted to Daylight Hours During Strike

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Madras Province for the second half of August 1946. Fortnightly Reports; *Public* (General) Department, Government of Madras (1946): Tamil Nadu State Archives.

Labour

The general strike on the South Indian Railway commenced on the 25th night but acting on reports of apprehended sabotage the railway administration cancelled all trains from the evening of 24th. By the end of the month about 40 per cent of the employees were on strike. But a definite tendency of drift-back to duty was noticeable. A few cases of removal of fishplates and bolts on the track have been reported but otherwise the situation has remained quiet. There has been picketing in several places and house-to-house intimidation of loyal workers has been reported from a number of stations. The police have taken adequate steps to maintain law and order and protect the loyal workers and the railway property. The transport of essential supplies has not been affected, and goods trains services which never ceased have been extended over wider areas and over branch lines. No reports have been received of scarcity of foodstuffs, fodder or fuel from any place except Malabar. The shortage in Malabar has, however, nothing to do with the strike. On 28-8-1946 the railway administration were able to run some passenger trains and since then their number is being steadily increased. As a measure of safety however, all services both passenger and goods continue to be restricted to daylight hours. From the point of view of the railway administration the situation is gradually improving but the Communists show no signs of calling off the strike.

3.A.ix September

1. A Critique of Congress Labour Policy

Article, 'Employers' arguments trotted out against workers' fight for living conditions'. *People's Age*, 1 September 1946.

Hard on the heels of Gandhiji's article on strikes, comes the Congress Working Committee's resolution laying down the policy towards labour and strikes. It speaks in terms and sentiments

which would be more worthy of employers and bureaucrats than of the High Command of a people's organisation.

There is no full-throated appreciation of the heroic, disciplined and organised mass resistance which the working-class and their trade unions are putting up against the conditions of starvation; there is no outright condemnation of the ruthless war profiteering both by the Government and the private employers which is the main cause of the workers' privations.

Instead we are told that "Labour unrest is causing heavy material loss ... to the community as well as to the working-class," and that the "serious privations of the workers are due to the tremendous economic maladjustments of the war."

Rising Profits

The profits of the textile mill owners have increased by 650 per cent during the war years while the real wages of the luckless textile workers have dwindled to 70.8 per cent of their prewar wage, not to speak of other serious handicaps regarding non-availability of housing, food, etc.

The number of railway workers has increased by 2½ lakhs in the years of war but the railway wage bill has remained stationary, while the Government and the Railway Board have funds enough at their disposal (made out of the huge war earnings) to increase the wages by 100 per cent.

Here is a situation of greedy profiteering by the capitalists, callous disregard of workers' interest by the bureaucrats face-to-face with an unbelievable degree of starvation and suffering among millions of workers.

It is not a situation which can be tackled by well meaning homilies to the workers about "the need of discipline and respect for rights and requirements of others," nor by prayers to the employers and the Government "to take early steps to satisfy the legitimate needs and aspirations of the working-class."

The Congress Working Committee entirely misses the mark when it opines that "Labour troubles" have been aggravated because of the absence of a well-defined National plan or machinery of conciliation, arbitration and adjudication.

The fact is that the troubles of labour as well as the hardships to the community both arise out of the cursed attitude of the employers and the Government, who do everything in their power to hinder the growth of "a strong trade union movement" by refusing to recognise mass trade unions, by denying them the right of collective bargaining with the employers, by victimising active trade union workers.

Conciliation Machinery

A conciliation and arbitration machinery, however perfect, has no meaning in the absence of freedom for trade union organisation, and in the absence of trade union recognition by owners.

On the other hand, to talk of "impartial" examination of workers' demands, of prompt settlements through conciliation and arbitration—while saying nothing about the fundamental right of trade union recognition, while turning a blind eye to the ruthless victimisation of trade union workers, which is being resorted to by mill owners as well as by railway authorities at present, is to play the bosses' game.

Curb the unions, smash the strike, deceive the workers and fool the public by a show of "impartial agencies of arbitration"—that is the labour policy of the employers and the bureaucrats.

It is all the more amazing to note that the Working Committee resolution which is silent on the question of trade union recognition and victimisation, which is silent on the responsibility of the employers and the Government to ensure minimum living conditions to the workers — is quite emphatic on banning all strikes in “particular industries and services which are essential for the existence of the community and public administration.”

A Belated Sanction?

Is the Working Committee resolution giving a belated sanction to the policies which the Congress Ministries are already pursuing by rushing through legislations to ban strikes and forcing arbitration upon the workers by attempting to suppress strikes and militant unions?

And more. Does this foreshadow the labour policy of the coming Interim Government at the Centre which would begin by depriving the workers in railways, post and other public utilities of their right to strike?

The resolution, which has said nothing of war against profiteers and of guaranteeing a minimum living wage to the workers, however, talks of a “vicious race between prices and wages accentuating existing difficulties.”

Apologists of profiteers have always talked of this vicious circle of rising wages being followed by rise in prices to justify the freezing of wages at starvation levels and to give a wide berth to the capitalists to garner in crores of rupees at the expenses of the workers and the community.

But this is not what the people expect of the Congress High Command and the future Interim Government manned by it. They demand a ruthless war on profiteers, urgent steps to promote industries and a guarantee of a minimum living wage to workers. That is the peoples’ way to smash the vicious circle of rising prices and wages.

Dangerous Trends

The resolution makes no mention of the All India Trade Union Congress under whose banner the overwhelming majority of the organised workers are rallied. Instead, the Working Committee passed a special resolution recognising the activities of the Hindustan Mazdoor Sevak Sangh, which in many places openly bolsters up boss-sponsored unions and disrupts the existing ones by setting up rival unions.

The resolution of the Working Committee is the harbinger of the most dangerous developments in the labour policy of the Congress. If carried to their logical conclusion, these developments would result in making Congress Ministries instruments of profiteers and vested interests, acting against the workers and the people. They would make Congressmen into strike breakers and opponents of the organised trade union movement. They would not only split the working-class movement, but would lead to disruption of the freedom movement as well.

2. Madras Workers’ and Students’ Support Municipal Strikers

Extracts from an article, ‘Workers and students voice indignant protest’. *People’s Age*, 1 September 1946.

On August 22, 50,000 workers and large numbers of students of Madras came out of their factories, workshops and colleges, in response to the call of the Madras Provincial Trade Union Congress (MPTUC) and Madras Students’ Organisation (affiliated to the AISF) to protest against police terror on the Corporation workers and express their solidarity with them in their just struggle.

The workers of tramways, Egmore Railway Locoshed, automobile industry, engineering factories, Binny Beach Engineering, Harbour, tanneries, press, etc., came out with their respective flags. The Buckingham and Carnatic Mill workers joined the strike in the afternoon, bus workers (in spite of their leader M.S. Naidu who calls himself a Congressman and issued a leaflet for strike, but later on backed out) joined the strike in the evening.

Thus the entire organised workers of the city solidly demonstrated their indignation against the police terror....

3. Strike Halts Entire South Indian Railway

Extracts from an article, 'SIR workers stand up to bosses' offensive. *People's Age*, 1 September 1946.

Forty thousand workers of the South Indian Railway (SIR) and Station Masters all over the line came out on strike on the midnight of August 24 in response to the call of the SIR Labour Union (Red Flag) and the Station Masters' Association. The entire railway traffic has stopped on the SIR covering over 4000 miles from Madras city in the north to the southernmost tip of India.

4. Military Accounts Clerks and Authorities on Collision Course

Extracts from an article, 'The Military Accounts strike continues'. *People's Age*, 1 September 1946.

Forty-one arrested in Patna, 22 in Jubbulpore, 12 in Lahore, 12 in Muttra, a similar story from other cities. Strikers lathi-charged, handcuffed and even refused bail. Section 144 introduced in a number of cities. Exceptionally heavy 'protection' for loyal workers. Military trucks ready to crush peaceful picketers under them in case they prevented blacklegs from entering offices. Threats of mass dismissals, orders to evacuate quarters, refusal to allow strikers to buy food rations from military shops, etc. That is the Government side in the nationwide strike of Military Accounts clerks which began on August 15 to fight the Government's plan to dismiss en masse 25,000 of them, out of a total staff numbering 35,000.

Open defiance of Section 144 by the clerks, active opposition to blacklegs, growing popular support to them everywhere, that is the clerks' side of the picture.

5. Brutal Force Used to Put Down Madras Corporation Strike

Extracts from a news report, 'Brutal terror let loose on Madras Corporation strikers'. *People's Age*, 1 September 1946.

Madras, August 23. Seldom has Madras city witnessed such savage police terror as is being used under the Prakasam Ministry against the 10,000 Corporation workers who have been on strike since August 13. These workers are mostly Harijans, they come from the most socially oppressed strata and do scavenging work for the city's seven lakh population. For this work, the vast majority of them today get the starvation wage of Rs 6 to Rs 16 per month. Their crime is that they demanded a living wage of Rs 35 a month from the Congress Ministry in power.

For seven long months, their Union, the Madras Corporation Union (MCLU, Red Flag), negotiated in vain with the Corporation for a peaceful settlement of their demand. The Corporation bossed over by an insolent ICS bureaucrat, Mr Shenoy, refused even their request for an interim settlement, an increase in basic pay of Rs 5 a month.

The Prakasam Ministry began by refusing to pull up the Corporation bosses, then openly went over to their side against 10,000 of the most lowly paid city workers.

The men were left with the alternatives of going on strike or starving.

Malabar Special Police to Break Strike

Once the strike started, the Ministry let loose an orgy of police terror to break it. The right to strike, the right of peaceful picketing—contained in the Congress Election Manifesto—have been reduced to a scrap of paper under the Prakasam Ministry in Madras Province.

Not content with using the ordinary police, the Ministry has drafted the hated Malabar Special Police (MSP) into the city to terrorise the workers.

Within the first week of the strike, over a hundred workers were arrested, picketers lathi-charged by the police over 50 times, and more than 300 men and women workers seriously wounded. The police nearly smashed a pregnant woman workers' head, she had to be removed to hospital unconscious. Seven other women workers were seriously wounded, they too had to be removed to hospital.

August 20: Reign of Terror

This police terror reached savage heights on August 20, when a 70-year-old woman was murdered as the result of a brutal lathi-charge; and MSP Raj reminiscent of Ashti and Chimur, was let loose in the Untouchable workers' cherais in Saidapet (a suburb of the city)....

6. Giridih and Bokharo Coal Miners Threaten Strike Action

Statement by Barin Dey, Organising Secretary, Coal Workers' Union, Giridih; Giridih, 1 September 1946. File No. 10; All India Trade Union Congress Papers (1946); Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

17,000 coal miners of the Giridih coalfields under the Indian Government Railways Coal Department will go on strike from 6.9.46. This decision was taken on 13.8.46 in a mass rally of more than 12,000 workers when the entire colliery was closed down as a protest against the failure of the colliery authority to meet the just demands of the workers or even to refer them to adjudication.

The conditions of the coal miners had been deteriorating since a decade or so and the 6 years of war had made them even worse—bringing them to the level of semi-starvation. The coal miners receive a meagre wage of 5 annas to 7 annas per day and the other categories of workers do not receive more than Rs 30 to Rs 35 per month which include dearness allowance and grain concessions. The bulk of the workers—being under the stranglehold of the Raising Contractors—are denied the privilege of leave with pay, for passes and PTO's, provident fund, and other amenities.

The demands include (i) rate of Re. 1 per tub (1/2 ton) for coal miners; (ii) grades of Rs 34 to Rs 50; Rs 40 to Rs 60; and Rs 50 to Rs 100 per month for unskilled, semiskilled and skilled workers respectively; (iii) Rs 16 per month as dearness allowance; (iv) hospital and water

supply facilities; (v) recognition of the Coal Workers' Union by the Railway Board; (vi) elimination of contract systems; etc.

This strike will also affect another 40,000 workers in the Bokaro coalfields (in the same subdivision and under the same management) and who are organised in the same union. The monthly coal output between these two collieries is about 2,25,000 tons.

7. South Indian Railway Strike Statistics

Press communique issued by the General Manager's Office, South Indian Railway; Trichinopoly, 3 September 1946. File No. 2040; Public (General) Department, Government of Madras (1946); Tamil Nadu State Archives.

*Trichinopoly,
3.9.1946*

Press Communique

Reports have recently appeared in the papers that the number of employees of the SI Railway who are on strike amounts to 42,000 out of a total of 48,000 employees. These reports are incorrect. The total number of employees on the SI Railway on 1st August, 1946, was 48,500.

2. It was not possible in the early days of the strike to ascertain the actual number of employees who went on strike on the night of the 24th/25th August, as several stations were totally unmanned on the morning of the 25th August, and it was not possible then to communicate with these stations. All those stations with the exception of nine have now been manned either by relieving staff sent out from Headquarters or by the staff themselves rejoining duty and now that communications have been restored, reliable figures of the total number of men who went on strike have become available. They amount to a total of 22,621 comprising Traffic 5732, Loco 5218, Engineering 6818, Commercial 432, Workshop 3377 and 1044 other Departments.

3. Of this number, a total of 4161 strikers have returned to duty up to 08-00 hours on the 3rd September 1946. The details are: Traffic 1410, Loco 634, Engineering 1557, Commercial 36, Workshops 321, and other Departments 203. The number of strikers at 08-00 hours on 3-9-46 was 18,460 or 38% of the total staff. The number of strikers who rejoined duty during the last three days were: 1st September 519, 2nd September 580 and 3rd September 832.

4. The Workshops figures given include the Central Workshops at Golden Rock, the Signal Engineering Workshop at Trichinopoly and the Marine Workshops at Mandapam.

Illegible.
for General Manager

8. United Provinces PCC's Draft Statement on Labour Policy

Draft statement prepared by Hariharnath Shastri, Convenor, Labour Subcommittee, United Provinces Provincial Congress Committee; 4 September 1946. File No. 163; Jayaprakash Narayan Papers (1946); Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

The Council of the UP Provincial Congress Committee has for some time been watching with keen interest the growing consciousness among the working-class of these provinces. The same has manifested itself in a rapid growth of trade unions in various industries and in a

number of strikes, aimed at advancing the economic interests of workers. There is no denying the fact that on certain occasions, strikes have commenced in an irresponsible fashion and without proper authority and notice. The Council has already, unequivocally expressed its disapproval of lightning and unauthorised strikes, as the same weaken the trade union movement and hamper the cause of the working-class. Barring such class [action?] the Council welcomes the new signs of awakening and the courage and restraint with which the working-class is conducting its day to day struggle and congratulates it for the same.

In view however of the fact that the Congress is holding the reins of Government in our province and further in view of the new role that the Congress is going to play in an all-india sphere by the formation of a national Government at the centre, the Council is definitely of opinion that the new awakening among workers and their organized strength and will should be diverted to constructive channels and that as a general rule, strikes should, for the present, give way to settlement of labour problems by close cooperation of labour with the Government—both central and provincial. The Council has no doubt that Government having the welfare of labour at heart and being anxious to foster the growth and development of a strong working-class movement in the province will do its utmost to solve all problems affecting industry and labour with sympathetic understanding of the view of [the] working-class on all such matters.

There are certain outstanding problems that the working-class is faced with—the most important being those of earnings and economic security. The war has brought about a fundamental change in the old conception of wages and it is essential that the whole question of wages should be reexamined most [most] carefully in all its bearings. Temporary adjustments will be wholly inadequate and will not resolve the perpetually recurring difficulties now arising out of the present prevailing system. A correct grasp of the question and a firm determination on the part of the state to boldly tackle it is the crying need of the moment. The problem of economic security is no less important. Workers employed particularly in undertakings owned by the Central Government are the worst sufferers at the present moment. Over fifty per cent workers employed in Military workshop have been thrown out of work or are on verge of retrenchment. The problem of unemployment is bound to crop up in other industries as well, in course of time, with the result that an unprecedented [unprecedented] unrest must become inevitable unless timely steps are taken to meet the situation. Rapid industrialization coupled with growth of cottage industries, and proper, effective and stringent control of industries by the state will go a long way to solve the problem. The question of providing other social amenities, i.e., unemployment insurance, sickness benefits, old age pensions and suitable housing accommodation will also have to be tackled both by provinces and also by the Central Government.

While analysing the root causes of discontent among workers, the Council notes that the immediate factor responsible for industrial unrest is that industrial relations are not properly regulated either by convention or by legislation, in our province. Trade Unions though registered are generally not recognised and as such they are not allowed to play their due role in collective bargaining. Besides there are no well-defined rules to regulate conditions of service. Standing orders framed by employers and as at present applied to industries are generally one-sided, arbitrary and detrimental to the interests of workers. The Council is pained to observe that in overwhelming majority of cases strikes during recent months have been occasioned or at least precipitated by attempts on the part of employers to introduce arbitrary changes in working conditions detrimental to the interests of workers and that too without any notice. This must

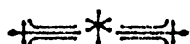
be put a stop to not only in the interest of the workers but of the community as a whole. A machinery of conciliation [conciliation] has of course been functioning in our province for the last nine years. There is also no denying the fact that it has succeeded in settling some disputes. All the same it is incomplete and imperfect. At present it is functioning within the frame work of DI Rules [Defence of India Rules], which aimed essentially at keeping up the tempo of war production by illegalising all strikes.

But with the cessation of the war these Defence of India Rules will come to an end on the 30th September 1946 and the machinery in force all these years will cease to operate. The Council is of opinion that the Government should undertake urgently for a comprehensive legislation to provide for settlement of trade disputes. The Council reaffirms the basic and inherent right of the working-class to strike for the promotion and protection of their rights. At the same time the Council [is] of opinion that in view of the present abnormal times, scarcity of consumer's goods, it is essential in the public interest that strike[s] should only be restored [resorted] to when other remedies for satisfactory settlement have been completely exhausted. Therefore the Council urge that Government should make provision by legislation for recognition of Trade Unions as medium of collective bargaining. For an adequate conciliation machinery and also whenever mutual settlement by conciliation is found difficult by arbitration of industrial disputes by impartial industrial courts or other suitable methods. The Council further urges that all possible steps should be taken in advance to prevent even the arising of such disputes and this end can be greatly promoted by the existence of suitable standing orders prepared in consultation with the workers' representatives.

While dealing with problems of labour, the attention of the Council is drawn to deplorable conditions of work prevalent in unregulated and seasonal industries, where labour is most sweated and deserves immediate relief. A survey of labour conditions in some of these industries—including Shellac and glass factories—has already been done by the Government and it is high time that the sad state of affairs as borne out by such survey[s] may be remedied.

The Council notes with great satisfaction that the UP Government have decided to set up a Committee of Inquiry to investigate into labour conditions in various industries. Completion of such an inquiry as [is] bound to take time. The Council is of opinion that the proposed enquiry should be split up into two parts, i.e., the short-term and the long-term. The question[s] such as those relating to social amenities of permanent nature may be covered by the latter part. But some of the most pressing problems particularly that of wages—must be tackled at once. With that end in view the proposed Committee of Inquiry should be required to submit an interim report dealing with such urgent matters.

In conclusion the Council must emphasise the urgent necessity of the workers organizing themselves speedily in representative unions. An endeavour should be made to persuade the largest possible number of workers in industry to become members of one Union. It is obvious that numbers give strength to a union, and the representative character of a union is a passport to its claim to negotiate and settle with the employers on behalf of the entire body of workers.



9. Police Fire on South Indian Railway Strikers

Extracts from a letter by T.A. Varghese, Collector, Trichinopoly, to S.V. Ramamurti, Chief Secretary, Government of Madras; Trichinopoly, 5 September 1946. File No. 2040; Public (General) Department, Government of Madras (1946); Tamil Nadu State Archives.

Trichinopoly,
5.9.1946.

Dear Mr Ramamurti,

I regret to report a serious disturbance which took place at Golden Rock this morning at about 9 a.m. The office of the Communist-controlled SI Rly Labour Union is at a distance of about 300 yards from the Golden Rock Police Station. Ever since the strike commenced in the Golden Rock Workshops, meetings used to be held both morning and evening at the Union Office at which labour leaders used to make speeches attacking the Railway administration and trying to keep up the morale of the strikers. These speeches were generally of an objectionable nature criticising the Police, senior Railway Officials and the present Ministry. Practically all the strikers of the Golden Rock Workshops used to attend these meetings. Shri K.A. Nambiar, MLA, the Secretary of the South Indian Railway Labour Union returned from Madras day before yesterday and I now understand that he made a few violent speeches yesterday and this morning at the Union premises practically inciting labourers to resort to force against the Police. The number of strikers who resumed duty at the Workshops yesterday was large—over 450—which fact also must have annoyed the labour leaders very considerably.

2. This morning the District Superintendent of Police and the Deputy Inspector-General of Police, CID were at the Golden Rock Police Station looking after general bundobust arrangements. They left the Police Station ... at about 8-45 a.m. At about 8-50 a.m. a patrol bus passing in front of the Union Office saw a crowd obstructing the roadway. The bus stopped and the officer in charge of the bus arrested four of them for causing obstruction and put them into the bus. While the bus was proceeding on its way a large crowd of people from inside the Union Office came out and threw stones at this bus. It was the time when the usual morning's meeting of the strikers was dispersing. The bus proceeded on its way without trying to deal with the persons who threw stones. Information about this incident immediately reached the Police Station. The Personal Assistant to the District Superintendent of Police jumped into a bus with an officer of the MSP [Malabar Special Police] and about 8 MSP constables and proceeded to the scene. A large crowd had collected on the road in front of the Union Office by then and the moment this bus reached the scene, it was heavily stoned. The Police party debussed and were immediately about to be overwhelmed by a large crowd estimated at about 3 to 4 thousands. Stones and soda bottles were hurled at them. The Police Officer in charge ordered a lathi charge, but before he could do anything effective the mob threatened to close [in] round the Police party. Two constables out of the eight who comprised that party were hit and one of them fell down unconscious. The party had only two rifles. The Personal Assistant immediately snatched a rifle from one of the constables. The MSP Officer seized the other remaining rifle and both of them opened fire 11 rounds were fired at this stage. But this made no impression on the crowd which merely withdrew to the Union premises and continued throwing stones and soda bottles. At this stage the Deputy Superintendent of Police who was also at the station came to their assistance with another party of 8 MSP constables. A section of

the crowd immediately turned its attention to this party with stones and soda bottles and threatened to overwhelm this party. The crowd was by then very much infuriated by the earlier firing and took up a menacing attitude. The Deputy Superintendent of Police ordered opening of fire and 15 rounds were fired in three directions. The bulk of the crowd then dispersed in various directions. But a few hundred of them got into the Union Office buildings, bolted the front doors from inside and got up on the terrace and started pelting stones at the Police party. By this time two more sections of the Police arrived on the scene and the officers in charge decided to clear the Union Office of the persons who were throwing stones at them. When they attempted to force open the doors the rioters headed by Sri K.A. Nambiar, MLA, came out armed with sticks and bichuvas [spears]. Sri K.A. Nambiar had a bichuva with him and with this he appears to have stabbed a Jemadar of the MSP. The blow was warded off and only a trivial injury was caused. There was a fight between this crowd and the Police Party. The lathi charge at this stage was a severe one, for the rioters stood ... their ground and fought back. However, within a few minutes the rioters were overwhelmed and they dispersed in all directions; but they left behind about 100 injured. The entire sequence of events so far narrated was over in about half an hour before the District Superintendent of Police got information and reached the scene.

3. Altogether 26 rounds were fired. Bullet wounds so far ascertained are 14. Three died on the spot and one died subsequently in the hospital. Of the remaining 10 bullet cases, two or three more may die. Injuries caused by the lathi charge are about 130 of which 30 are fairly serious and are being treated as in-patients in the hospital. The remaining 100 are trivial injuries to be dealt with as out-patient cases. All the injured were immediately carried to the Headquarters Hospital and prompt medical attention was given. On the Police side 4 constables sustained fairly serious injuries and about 15 others trivial injuries....

Yours sincerely,
T.A. Varghese.
5/9/46.

P.S. Sri K.A. Nambiar, M.L.A., has sustained a fairly serious injury on the head involving fracture of the skull. It was caused in the lathi charge. I saw him in the hospital. He may survive.

10. Police Firing at Amalner and Golden Rock Condemned by Different Unions

Extracts from a copy of a resolution passed at a public meeting in Ahmedabad on 8 September 1946 under the joint auspices of the Gujarat Regional Trade Union Council, Communist Party, Mill Kamdar Union, and BB & CI Railwaymen's Union. File No. 141; All India Trade Union Congress Paper (1946); Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

This meeting under the joint auspices of Gujarat Regional Trade Union Council, Communist Party, Mill Kamdar Union, PB & CI Railwaymen's Union, etc., Ahmedabad, condemns the firing on workers on peaceful and legal strikes at Amalner and Golden Rock, SI Rly, and pays homage to the martyrs, murdered by the police under the Congress Ministries of Bombay and Madras respectively and conveys its deep condolences to the relatives of the dead.

The fact that such atrocities take place under the Congress Ministries' regime is a grave danger to our national movement. The Congress should discontinue participating in the imperialist game of crushing the workers' just struggles and should wipe out this disgrace ...

Maganlal Patel.
Prarthana Samaj, Ahmedabad.
8.9.1946.

11. Amalner Strike Leader Shot in Police Firing

Extracts from an article, 'Reckless police firing on peaceful meeting'. *People's Age*, 8 September 1946.

"I am going away comrades. It is now up to you to defend our flag. Lal Salaam." These were the last words Shripat Patil, young communist leader and General Secretary of the Amalner Girni Kamgar Union (Red Flag), could speak to his colleagues as he fell victim to the bullets fired by the Congress Ministry's police on a peaceful meeting of workers on August 27. Seven more workers, including Gangadhar Bhila Patil, Vice-President of the Union, died a hero's death along with him. One more died the next day.

Their "crime" was that they had been conducting a legal strike to the local textile workers. Defying a District Magistrate's gag order which operated simultaneously with this legal strike, they held a peaceful meeting, their first after 20 days of strike.

It had been a strike without a single "incident". The huge procession that preceded the meeting also did not lead to any "incident". And yet, without any previous warning, without any provocation whatsoever, the DSP who had had the meeting cordoned off the minute it assembled, ordered firing.

Twenty armed brutes of his blocked every possible outlet for these 5000 men and women and fired. Sixty rounds they fired, killing nine people, wounding 69 more. Forty-four of these are lying in hospital, three in a precarious condition.

Cold-blooded Massacre

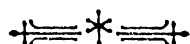
It was a massacre under a Congress Ministry, most savage and cold-blooded, paralleled only by General Dyer's butchers at the Jallianwala Bagh in 1919. Home Member Morarji Desai's new guns were "effectively" used.

Workers who died include Gangadhar Bhila Patil (died on the spot), Shripat Bhila Patil, Mokal Zumkiram Bhavsar, Bansi Jivan Koli, Sonu Ranga Chambhar, Ratan Hari Patil, Shanker Dhondhu Maratha and Shanker Motiram Bari.

Among the wounded is Gambhir Patil (brother of Shripat Patil), who was sentenced for participating in the August 1942 movement and who was released only four or five months ago. With gunshots in both legs he is lying in serious condition in hospital.

There are some Muslim workers too among the wounded.

Next day, it is learnt, the DSP who ordered the firing and himself murdered Shripat Patil and one more worker, was gratefully treated to a tea party by the local mill owner who calls himself a Congressman....



12. Nagpur Government Press Workers on Strike

Extracts from a pamphlet, 'Heroic strike of Government Press workers', published by H.K. Vyas, Acting President, Press Employees Association, Nagpur; Nagpur, 9 September 1946. File No. 72; Political and Military Department, Government of the Central Provinces & Berar (1946); Madhya Pradesh State Archives.

From the 6th the workers of the Government Press have gone on Strike. So great is the Unity of the workers that out of a total complement of three hundred and fifty, only two persons attended on the 6th and today one of them has also joined the strike. Important persons like the Foreman, the Section-holders and even the Assistant Superintendent have joined the Strike; and despite the Police cars being sent to their residences, they are not only refusing to go on duty but are even protesting against this form of coercion [coercion] and intimidation. We owe it to the public to explain the why and the antecedent circumstances of the Strike and appeal to them to support our just cause.

For years the workers of the Government Press have been suffering untold hardships, ravages of favouritism, and denial of the most elementary rights regarding conditions of pay, leave and overtime,

It is well-known that work of the Press is more strenuous. In many private presses too, the duty hours are only seven; we had also demanded duty hours from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. We had demanded a corresponding increase in the pay of the time-rated and piece-rated staff; and also that all work beyond these daily normal duty hours be treated as overtime and be paid at double the rate as per the Factories Act....

Workers of the Lino and Mono Sections have to work under dangers of lead poisoning. Despite the rules of the Government of India, no arrangement for their health are made....

For petty reasons like late-coming, fines are imposed and even the increment is barred....

We wanted to give our Popular Ministry also sufficient time. So we again submitted our memorandum in July requesting for a reply by August 10. But no reply was received. We decided to go in deputation, that too was refused hearing; and above all, the Government prejudged the demand of time of work and issued a notice without any consultation with the Union. We consider this as definite provocation....

The Government is pursuing the same policy still. Even though the Strike is absolutely peaceful; even picketing is not becoming necessary, the Government harasses our workers. It has arrested Comrade O.P. Mehta, the Secretary of our Union, while he was carrying on propaganda for the Strike. It threatens (the Police Officials on duty at the Press gate) our volunteers with arrest. Police Officers even question the workers as to why they do not go on duty and thus are bringing pressure. And on the top of it all, the Police is sending its vans to the residences of the superior staff, and asking them to come to work. True, the workers are not going to be terrorised by these methods; and nothing will be able to break their solidarity, but such repressive measures from a Congress Ministry certainly do speak of the terribly reactionary trend getting the upper hand.

We appeal to the Public to protest against the attitude. We appeal to them to extend us sympathy and support and bring pressure on the Ministry....

J.K. Vyas.
Acting President,
Press Employees Association, Nagpur.
9th September 1946.

13. Congress Labour Leaders Arrested During Lucknow General Strike

Extracts from a news report, 'General labour strike in Lucknow'. *Hindustan Times*, 12 September 1946.

Lucknow, September 11. A general labour strike has begun today in Lucknow, following the arrest and detention yesterday under the DIR [Defence of India Rules] of Mr Kanhaiya Lal Srivastava, President of the UP Provincial Trade Union Congress, and Mr Chandra Prakash, working President of the Transport Workers' Union.

More than 4000 municipal scavengers and jamadars, private sweepers, water carriers, tonga, cart and ekka drivers, hotel bearers and needleworkers struck work this morning without notice.

Mr Shibban Lal Saxena, a member of the Council of the UPPCC and Mr Balram Singh, Secretary, Lucknow District Congress Committee, were arrested tonight under the Defence of India Rules in connection with the labour strike in Lucknow.

It is feared that the strike may spread to essential services, like waterworks and electricity. A threat to this effect is stated to have been given to the Government by labour leaders in case the arrested persons are not released unconditionally.

The Government are preparing for all eventualities. A Government spokesman said: "The Government are prepared to give full liberty to labour leaders to agitate labour by peaceful means, but if the leader preach violent while addressing labour meetings, the Government cannot sit quietly." ...

14. Confrontation with Ministry Over Arrested Lucknow Strike Leaders

Extracts from a news report, 'General strike in Lucknow'. *Free Press Journal*, 13 September 1946.

Lucknow, September 12. Lucknow witnessed a spontaneous general labour strike yesterday as a sequel to the arrest and detention of Mr Kanhaiyalal Srivastava, President of the UP Provincial Trade Union Congress, and Mr Chandra Prakash, Working President of the Transport Workers' Union, on Tuesday under Section 126 and 129 of the DIR.

More than four thousand municipal scavengers and Jamadars, private sweepers, water carriers, tonga, cart and ekka drivers, hotel bearers and needleworkers struck work yesterday morning without notice.

The strikers, including a large number of women carrying babies in their arms shouting slogans paraded the main streets of the city and squatted on the road in front of the Council Chamber. The crowd was addressed by some of the local labour leaders, while Mr Shibban Lal Saxena, a member of the Executive of the UPCC and the spokesman of the strikers was closeted with the Premier, Pandit Govind Ballabh Pant, Mr Sampurnanand, Minister of Finance, Mr C. Gupta, Parliamentary Secretary and Mr H.T. Lane, District Magistrate, negotiating for an early termination of the strike.

Conditions Demanded

After conferring with the Premier, Mr Saxena informed the waiting crowd that the negotiations to release the arrested leaders had broken down. The Premier was prepared to release the arrested leaders only on condition that they would not encourage strikers and would not foment further trouble. As he was not in a position to give such an assurance the negotiations broke down.

The strikers thereupon marched to Amin-ud-Doulah Park where a meeting was held.

Transport Paralysed

The sudden labour strike has temporarily paralysed the city's transport system and has exposed its inhabitants to the danger of an epidemic. Heaps of garbage are lying in street corners and the roads are covered with dirt and filth. A few municipal scavengers who cleaned the roads in spite of the threat of excommunication were assaulted by the strikers and their baskets and brooms were snatched.

Office-going clerks, lawyers and litigants were put to great hardships and were seen trudging long distances.

Strike May Spread

It is feared that the strike may spread to essential services, like waterworks and electricity. A threat to this effect is stated to have [been] given to Government by labour leaders in case the arrested persons are not released unconditionally.

Government on the other hand, it is learnt, are preparing for all eventualities. A Government spokesman said "Government are prepared to give full liberty to labour leaders to agitate for the removal of all legitimate grievances of labour by peaceful means, but if the leaders preach violence while addressing labour meetings, Government cannot sit quietly."

The strikers assembled at a meeting in the evening at Aminuddaula Park Mr Shibban Lal Saxena presiding and adopted resolutions criticising the Ministry for detaining the two labour leaders and resolving to continue the strike till they were released unconditionally.

The meeting decided to take out a procession today and hold a demonstration in front of the Council Chamber.

Mr Saxena addressing the meeting referred to his parleys with the Premier and called upon the strikers to remain peaceful.

The District Magistrate of Lucknow in a press communique on the general strike in the UP says the city was today faced with a general breakdown of all essential services. The administration cannot allow the safety and health of the population of Lucknow to be imperilled.

The Law Takes its Course

"As all attempts to persuade the disruptive elements to desist from their irresponsible course failed, the law has inevitably taken its course and ten persons including Mr Shibban Lal Saxena have been placed under arrest."

Mr Ansar Harvani, a members for the All India Congress Committee, has been served with a notice by the City Magistrate of Lucknow to show cause why he should not be bound down under Section 107, IPC [Indian Penal Code] read with Section 117, IPC and made to sign a personal bond for Rs 500 each to keep peace in the city....

15. South Indian Railway Workers Begin to Return to Work

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Madras Province for the first half of September 1946. Fortnightly Reports; Public (General) Department, Government of Madras (1946); Tamil Nadu State Archives.

Labour

The strike in the South Indian Railway continues but workers are steadily returning to duty. The number now on strike is about 20 per cent. The Railway administration have been able to increase the number of both passenger and goods services, although they are still confined to daylight hours. Facilities have been offered by the Government to Mr S. Guruswamy of the All India Railwaymen's Federation to contact the principal strike leaders who are now under arrest with a view to taking action for calling off the strike. A meeting of these leaders has been arranged on the 22nd September to consider the calling off of the strike.

16. Muslim Labour of Bengal Slow to Return to Work After Communal Riots

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Bengal for the first half of September 1946. File No. 18/9/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Political

9. There are indications that the CPI and similar organisations are actively attempting to stir up discontent among the police though, with the end of the postal strike, the strike fever somewhat abated.

Labour

13. No new strike took place during the fortnight under review. The strike at Burnpur continues—the leader of the strikers, Abdul Bari, maintaining that he is ready to keep the labour out for three months—the Directors, in their turn, stating that they are quite prepared to initiate a lockout for anything like six months. So far the strike has been peaceful.

14. The strike at Guest, Keen, Williams continues but the strike in the Imperial Bank has now been settled following a deputation of strikers to the Government of India.

15. Mills and factories which were closed in the Calcutta area during the communal disturbances have again reopened but attendance in some of them is below normal due to the fact that a large number of workers left during the riots and also because the workers—generally Muslims—who form the minority community in most of the affected industrial areas are still too afraid of being assaulted to resume work.

16. The labour in two collieries of Messrs Andrew Yule & Co in the Asansol subdivision of Burdwan district has been on strike since the 5th and has been attempting, without success, to persuade other collieries to join. The strike is reported to be a Congress effort designed to demonstrate to the Communists that they are not the only people who can influence labour.

The strike of 3000 piece workers of the Bengal-Nagpur Railway workshop at Kharagpur continues, the workers now demanding to be paid for the strike period.

16. The departure of Mr Sibnath Banerjee, MLA, for Canada to attend a labour conference has been greeted with a sigh of relief.

17. Serious trouble occurred on the 28th August on the Teesta Valley Tea Estate where a large number of labourers invaded the Manager's bungalow with the apparent intention of killing an Assistant Manager: a strong police force was sent who removed the Assistant Manager and dispersed the mob. Subsequent efforts on the 10th of this month to arrest persons wanted in connection with these incidents resulted in a demonstration by the labourers against the police who were forced to open fire injuring two labourers.

17. Labour Situation Remains Unsettled in the United Provinces

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for the United Provinces for the first half of September 1946. File No. 18/9/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Labour

The fortnight has been another troublesome one with Communists in Cawnpore in particular striving to influence the workers to combine in a general strike. As a result of their efforts lightning strikes took place in several concerns including Messrs Cooper Allen, the Cawnpore Tannery, the JK Cotton Mills, the Muir Mills, and the Atherton West Mills. The close of the period marked an intensification of the strike fever the details of which will be noted in my next report.

The strike of the Imperial Bank clerks, the Central Ordnance Depot, and the Harness and Saddlery Factory, and the Clothing Factory continued, while strikes in three other concerns were called off on settlement. Since the close of the fortnight it is understood that the clerks of the Imperial Bank have returned to work. Six strike notices have been received for the future, and at least one of them has already come to fruition. In the first half of September, the scavengers and jemadars of the Lucknow Municipal Board, struck work, but the strike was called off after a few days, great inconvenience having been caused to the public during this period. Precautions had to be taken to prevent an outbreak of epidemics, and some of the leaders and instigators had to be arrested including Mr Shibban Lal Saxena. On the strike being called off the arrested persons were released.

Dissatisfaction amongst the workers is not limited to Cawnpore, and discontent heralding strikes, or actually ending in strikes, is reported from other parts of the province, such as Meerut, Hathras, Saharanpur and Benares. Subordinate Government servants of all types continue to be dissatisfied with their conditions and the tube-well operators in some districts of the Hydel area in the west of the Province have struck work.

18. Labour Situation Unpredictable in the Punjab

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for the Punjab for the first half of September 1946. File No. 18/9/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Labour

The strike of Imperial Bank employees is the only one of any importance now in progress in the province. There is thus some improvement in the situation but it is essentially surface in character and furnishes little real reason for satisfaction. Labour unrest is in fact unabated, and wherever there is labour and whenever there is opportunity political interference continues

unchanged by the new complexion of the Central Government. Unfortunately there is little if any justification for hoping that labour will, or will be allowed to, become more reconciled to honest work than is now the case. In particular, the adverse effect on labour of the Communists is likely to become more pronounced in pursuance of a policy recently announced which has as its aim the seizure of power by force by the labouring classes. Another factor which may complicate and aggravate the labour situation is the decision to start a Mazdur Muslim League. Communalism is already present in the labour world, but, organised, its proportions will increase with an effect which is not easily predictable.

19. Strike Wave in Bihar Begins to Abate

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Bihar for the first half of September 1946. File No. 18/9/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Labour

The lock outs in the Tatanagar Foundry and the Hindustan Cycle Works continue. The adjudicator's award in the Tinplate Company dispute has now been announced and so far both management and labour appear to be satisfied. In the Cable Company there has been a great deal of discontent over the discharge of surplus workers, and the management report that indiscipline, pilfering and willful damage by workers is rampant. The possibility of the strike in the near future cannot be ignored. Towards the end of August Professor Abdul Bari, as President of the Tata Labour Union, served a strike notice on Tatas but it seems likely that the strike in the Steel Company will be averted.

The Communist Labour Union had prepared for a general strike to take place in the Giridih coalfields from the 6th instant, but on the intervention of the Deputy Commissioner and the Superintendent of Police the strike has been postponed till the 24th instant. In the Dhanbad coalfields of the Diamond Tisra Colliery some workers went on strike to protest against the bad quality of rice supplied to them and in the East India Coal Company there was a token strike for one day to protest against the prosecution of the Labour Union Secretary.

The strike in the Indian Pottery Works and the China Clay Mines at Karanjia continues. A strike has been threatened by the workers of the Saran Engineering Works Marhowrah over the supply of rations and dearness allowance.

The strike of the employees of the Controller of Military Accounts has now been called off but there is considerable discontent among many ministerial officers in the Collectorates and a strike has been threatened.

20. CP and Berar Ministry Brings Pressure to Bear on Communists

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for the Central Provinces and Berar for the first half of September 1946. File No. 18/9/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Labour

The houses of the leading Communists and their offices in about half a dozen centres throughout the province were searched simultaneously, but little incriminating [evidence?] has been found. It seems likely that the Bombay searches had put them on their guard and they had managed

to keep away all the papers. Public meetings were nevertheless held protesting against what was described as the undemocratic action of the Popular Government. They boasted that such action would neither break nor bend the Communists and that they would carry on their activities in spite of all "persecution".

The Communists have managed to secure ascendancy over the Government Press workers with the result that a complete strike was brought about with effect from the 6th instant. This has since been called off on an assurance being given that their legitimate grievances would be enquired into by an ad hoc committee.

Otherwise there are signs that the labour situation is slowly returning to normal. At any rate, there is much less talk of strikes than heretofore.

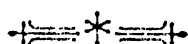
21. Labour Situation Reported as Unsatisfactory in Sind

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Sind for the first half of September 1946. File No. 18/9/46; Home (Political) Department, Government on India (1946; National Archives of India.

Labour

The situation is very unsatisfactory. On the 12th September the East India Tramways workmen came out on strike after having given notice of a strike on the 28th August. The strike was prohibited under Defence of India Rule 81-A, since the Company had announced its readiness to negotiate on the basis of a standing agreement between the Company and the Union provided the notice of strike was withdrawn. The workmen resumed unconditionally the next day whether in answer to the Government's order or to a notice by the Manager, it is difficult to say. There is little doubt that Mr Naraindas Bechar, president of the Union has lost influence amongst the workmen and that the strike went further than he had intended. In the meantime, Mr Bechar has produced something approaching a crisis in the affairs of the oil distributing companies. Burmah Shell is the main target of his agitation. The newly organized or revived Karachi Oil Installation Workers Union is an institution of doubtful stability and its affairs would probably not bear close scrutiny. But there is very little doubt that Mr Bechar can succeed in bringing the men out on strike. The Managements are reluctant to deal direct with Mr Bechar and expect Government to get them out of the difficulty, arguing that it is all wrong that he should be able to create a Union by stirring up trouble amongst their workmen. What they apparently fail to realize is that the general labour unrest has affected all workmen, who are extremely pliable material for an agitator.

A strike in the docks has been postponed at the last minute. Here there is rivalry between two Unions, one the Karachi Dock Workers Union and the other, the Karachi Port Workers Union. Of the former the ubiquitous Mr Naraindas is president and is affiliated to the All India Trade Union Congress, while the second is affiliated to the All India Federation of Labour and one Mr Khatib is the Secretary and prime mover. The strike was to have been sponsored by the Port Workers Union. It was reported that Mr Khatib played the communal note against Mr Naraindas and his Congress associations.



22. South Indian Railway Strike Leaders Arrested

Extracts from a report by E.L. Cox, Deputy Superintendent, Government Railway Police, Trichinopoly, to Inspector General of Police, Madras; Trichinopoly, 16 September 1946. File No. 2040; Public (General) Department, Government of Madras (194); Tamil Nadu State Archives.

Daily Report for 15-9-46

The general improvement in the situation is maintained with more instances of strikers resuming duty in the outstations. The running of the usual daylight train services continues.

2. The following are the departmental figures of returns to duty on 13 and 14-9-46:

Department	13-9-46	14-9-46	Balance on strike	Out of
Traffic	154	115	2,851	13,671
Loco	83	61	3,834	9,764
Engineering	224	169	3,692	13,467
Commercial	25	10	224	897
Others	79	2	481	5,120
	565	357	11,082	42,919

3. No act of sabotage for the last 24 hours has been reported.

4. The Town Police, Cannanore, have charged some Communists who resorted to picketing near the third class passenger shed at Cannanore Railway Station on 11-9-46. Reports of arrests also include Shanmugam—Vice-President of the Villupuram Branch of the Labour Union—arrested by Villupuram Local Police under Section 151 Cr PC, and Raghavanandam—one of the Strike Committee Members—arrested at Lalgudi on 12-9-46 for intimidation of loyal workers.

Strike propaganda continues to be vigorous on the West Coast particularly at Shoranur where speeches inciting violence have been made. A suggestion to prohibit the meetings under 144 CrPC has been made to the District Superintendent of Police, Malabar....

23. Labour Conditions in Coal Mines of Bihar

Report by V.M. Shah, Conciliation Officer for Bihar, Department of Labour, Government of India; Jamadoba, 16 September 1946. File No. 152; Jayaprakash Narayan Papers (1946); Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

Fortnightly Review of the Labour Situation in the Central Undertakings and Establishments

Report No. 28

... The present state of the coal labour is very peculiar. Very often the labour is not steady and continuous but migratory. The labour is also extremely illiterate and this illiteracy has been exploited by the colliery owners especially by the owners of the small collieries. The big collieries are in the hands of people who are industrialists of great reputation in the country and therefore they have always tried to keep their labour happy and contented. The case of the small colliery owners gives the different picture. The exploitation of the coal by them, is

not only reckless but uneconomical and the exploitation of the labour can be termed as inhuman sometime [s]. In the case of the small collieries there are sometimes no Mining Engineers, no arrangement of Dhowrahs and no arrangement for water supply even. During the War period in order to facilitate the work of distribution of ration, the Central Government, at the request of the Colliery owners, decided to allot foodstuffs to the three main groups of the collieries, and through them to the individual colliery owners.

The system, no doubt, has its advantages, but it has given rise also to many malpractices. Black market in this area, is perhaps unprecedented and unparalleled. In spite of the fact that a huge quota of cloth and foodstuffs is being given to this area the main complaint of the labour in this area is the absence of the fair distribution of both to the labour. I am of the opinion that this is openly done by the small colliery owners regardless of any established authority or the laws of the land....

The argument is very often put forward by the employers that the labour is very unproductive and, therefore, they cannot afford to pay higher wages. I am of the opinion that labour is unproductive because of the lack of modern industrial equipment in adequate proportion. Economic development of a country brings a rise in the labour productivity and automatically it would bring rise in the wages. This country unfortunately, is backward not only in the material machinery equipment but also in the technical research facilities. It is cost of production per unit of output which counts in competition. The services of labour, in an undeveloped country though very cheap when measured in man hours are very expensive when measured in cost per unit on output. Experience has shown that competition of low wage labour will not injure labour in the advanced country if the advanced country maintains flexibility, keeping the forefront of technical progress and the aim at expanding production in promising industries rather than at defending to the bitter end, those industries on uneconomic principles.

Threats of Strikes

1. Digwadih—Tata's Colliery

A local strike was threatened on the 24th Aug. 46 at the Digwadih Colliery by the entire labour on the ground that the quality of rice was bad and they were not prepared to accept the rice which was to be distributed. The plea of the Management was, that whatever foodstuffs they were getting from the Rice Controller, they were distributing. In order to avoid the trouble, the Management agreed to the proposal to distribute superfine rice which is 7 As [annas] a seer at the rate of 5 As a seer for which medium rice is available.

2. Jealgora—Jardine, Skinner & Co

On the 6th Aug. 46 the trouble arose here from a defamation case filed by a Timekeeper against the Secretary of the Labour Union. The workers wanted to demonstrate a strike by way of protest. Mr Howieson, the Coal Superintendent, was requested to talk personally to the workers and his personal talk brought down peaceful atmosphere in a short time. This colliery [has] had a very peaceful atmosphere till now. But since the arrival of Mr Satya Sen, who, I am told, was exonerated during the War period from this area on charges of defalcation of accounts and other malpractices, lot of outside agitators have set up parties and factions and the colliery atmosphere remains greatly disturbed.

Strikes

1. Kirkend—On the 21st Aug. 46 the workers of this colliery went on strike on the ground that the quality of rice was very bad and also there was no adequate watersupply to the labour.

2. Tisra—On the 5th Sept. 46 the trouble arose here from the quality of rice. Fortunately the trouble was located to the Workshop. It [the trouble] remained for three days and I succeeded in persuading the labour leader, Mukutdhari Singh, to accept the formula that whatever superfine rice was available at the colliery, should be distributed along with the medium rice. Afterwards, the trouble subsided.

In this connection it may be noted that the IMA people and the Tatas have decided, in order to avert this trouble, to distribute superfine rice which is 7 As a seer at a concession rate of 5 As.

3. Power House—6 & 7 Pits, Tata's Jamadoba Colliery.

The facts are mentioned in my report No. 27 dated the 11th Sept. 46. The trouble arose from a quarrel between a clerk and a coolie and the local strike took a serious turn, for by 1 p.m. the whole power House was threatened to be closed down. I intervened and on the assurance of going through the grievances, the strike was called off.

In all the above cases the strike cannot be called legal.

V.M. Shah.
Conciliation Officer for Bihar.

24. Strikers Returning to Work-- Statistics Questioned

Extracts from a letter by Manek Gandhi, Assistant Secretary, to N.M. Joshi, General Secretary, All India Trade Union Congress; Bombay, 17 September 1946. File No. 8; All India Trade Union Congress Papers (1946); Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

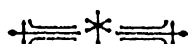
Bombay,
17 September 1946.

Dear Comrade Joshi

I am in receipt of your letter dated 11th instant. I have noted its contents. I have informed Comrade Ranadive that Mr Asaf Ali is not prepared to send Mr S.C. Joshi to Madras to settle the SI Railway dispute. I have read your statement in the press today regarding the SIR strike. I have today received a letter from the SIR informing us that the strike is continuing and that the figures given by the Manager regarding the workers resuming work are totally false. Now that Com D.S. Vaidya is there, I am sure you will be able to do something about settling the dispute honourably for both sides....

I am glad to learn from your letter that Com Sibnath has finally gone to Montreal. Only a day before I received your letter, I had a letter from Mrinal Babu informing me that Com Sibnath was not willing to go as an adviser to Com Mirajkar for reasons which we can understand.

I understand from the papers that Com Abid Ali has gone to Switzerland. How is it that he has not gone to Montreal? He told me a day before he left Bombay that he was going to Montreal. News about his being in Switzerland came as a big surprise to me.



25. Monghyr Citizens Demand Reinstatement of Dismissed Policemen

Resolution adopted at a public meeting by the citizens of Monghyr; 20 September 1946. File No. 159; Jayaprakash Narayan Papers (1946); Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

In a well attended public meeting of the citizens of Monghyr representing various sections of the people, held on the 20th September 1946 the following Resolution was passed unanimously. The meeting was presided over by Pandit Shree Krishna Misra, MA, BL. The Resolution was moved by Mr Akhileshwar Prasad, Advocate, and seconded by Mr Abdul Ghani, Advocate. The meeting was also addressed by Mr Satrughan Singh, Pleader, Mr Mobinul Haque—Secretary of Monghyr Postal Union and Mr Ramanand Tewari, the accredited pleader of the Police of the Province, who addressed the gathering at length. The meeting was impressive and successful and unique also in the sense that for the first time the public assembled openly to sympathise and patronise with the police constables who have also changed their attitude towards their country and countrymen....

Resolution

This public meeting of the citizens of Monghyr is of opinion that the discharge of nineteen Police constables of the Monghyr Reserve Armed Police Force is unjustified and requests the authorities to reinstate them to their posts.

Shree Krishna Mishra,
President.
20/9/46.

26. Congress and the Hindustan Mazdoor Sevak Sangh

Extracts from a copy of a letter by P.H. Patwardhan, Member, Working Committee, Indian National Congress, to the General Secretary, All India Congress Committee; New Delhi. 22 September 1946. File No. 123; Jayaprakash Narayan Papers (1946); Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

*New Delhi,
22nd September '46.*

Sir,

The Working Committee has appointed a committee consisting of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, Shri Gulzarilal Nanda and myself to suggest if any changes are necessary in the constitution and personnel of Hindustan Mazdoor Sevak Singh so that all Congressmen working in the labour field may accept its lead. If Congressmen are to be effective in the task of organizing labour it is necessary to put an end to all rivalry and friction among Congress labour workers and union controlled by them.

The Central Board of Mazdoor Sevak Sangh needs to be changed. It must have a larger number of labour specialists like Gulzarilal Nanda. I mean men like Shri Hariharanath Shastri, Mr Giri, Mr Kallappa, Mr Purshottam Trikamdas, who have a long experience of the Trade Union Congress and whose work is restricted primarily to labour activities should be there.

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru as President of the Congress, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel who is at present the head of the Mazdoor Sevak Sangh will of course be there. Shri Jayaprakash Narain should be included in the board.

If the Central Board is reconstituted on these lines it will receive willing allegiance and cooperation of all Congressmen who are working in the labour field.

Some Changes are obviously necessary in the constitution of the Hindustan Mazdoor Sevak Sangh. Unfortunately the committee could never meet. Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel is too busy with other and more pressing work. Shri Gulzarilal Nanda could not leave Poona as he is preparing a new Industrial Relations Bill.

I met him on the 14th of September and requested him to spare some time to discuss the question. He told me that no useful discussion was possible unless and until Sardar Patel was present....

[PH] Patwardhan.

27. Doubts Raised Over Reports of the Ending of South Indian Railway Strike

Extracts from a news report, 'Repression fails to break SIR strike'. *People's Age*, 22 September 1946.

Madras, September 16. The reports appearing in the Press for the last four days that the SIR strike is virtually over, that the Union may withdraw it within 24 hours, is all deliberately cooked up propaganda. In spite of all the terror used to coerce railway workers in different centres to come back to work, in spite of the fact that the entire branch Union leadership throughout the line has been arrested, the strike is still continuing firmly....

28. Military Accounts Clerks Victimised Despite Calling Off Strike

Letter by Damodar Swarup Seth, Working President, All India Federation of Military Accounts Unions, Lucknow, to Jawaharlal Nehru; Lucknow, 23 September 1946. File No. 162; Jayaprakash Narayan Papers (1946); Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

Lucknow,
23 September 1946.

Respected Panditji,

In a General Council meeting of the All India Federation of Mily. Accts. Unions held on 17th Sept., 1946 in Lucknow, I as working president of the Federation have been authorised to negotiate the terms of settlement of the recent strike with the Interim Government and to guide the future plan of action of the Federation.

In this connection I may kindly be permitted to present the following facts for your kind and sympathetic orders. The strike was called off unconditionally under your advice to the deputation that waited on you on the 29th August 1946 headed by Mr Mohan Lal Gautam. Having obtained the assurance of your sympathy the deputation did not consider it necessary to go into the details of the terms of settlement and therefore called off the strike unconditionally and your good self also hoped there would be no difficulty for the strikers in resuming office.

However, the Departmental authorities have taken this as a complete surrender and are victimising the strikers ruthlessly and also humiliating and taunting them in a provocative manner. The following are the few instances that have been reported so far.

- (1) Muttra: 104 clerks out of a total strength of 400 have not been allowed to resume duty.
- (2) Lucknow: 65 clerks are under suspension and 90 punkha pullers have been discharged.
- (3) Agra: 40 clerks out of 175 are under suspension.
- (4) Deolali: 21 clerks under suspension and 9 peons dismissed.
- (5) Aurangabad: 16 clerks under suspension.
- (6) Jubbulpore: 10 peons have been discharged.
- (7) Jalna: 8 clerks under suspension.
- (8) Fatehgarh: 3 clerks have been suspended.
- (9) Lahore: 10 clerks have been discharged.
- (10) Shillong & Chittagong: No one is allowed to resume duty.

The humiliation and taunts meted out to clerks at Muttra especially knows no bounds. The officers are prescribing the way they should be saluted by the clerks. Official insult to the dignity and self respect of the clerks cannot go any further. This is not all. They have constituted a Selection Board consisting of officers and the so-called 'loyal' clerks. Anybody before resuming duty is produced before the Board. He has to salute both the officers and the 'loyal' clerks, tender apologies for the past conduct and shall only be allowed to resume duty if the 'loyal' clerks forgive him. In some cases they have even insisted on unconditional apologies from the parents of the strikers.

In view of the above state of official persecution that is increasing day by day the situation has become exceedingly complicated and there is a lot of dissatisfaction and unrest amongst the clerks. So in order to obtain complete cooperation from the clerks it is considered in the interest of service that the *status quo* before the strike should be restored immediately viz.

- (1) There should be no victimisation in any form. All suspended and discharged employees should be reinstated immediately.
- (2) All cases pending in the courts against picketers should be withdrawn and Provincial Govts. to be informed accordingly.
- (3) The Interim Relief sanctioned by the Govt of India should be paid to all.
- (4) Grant of pay for the strike period.
- (5) Impartial enquiry into the circumstances relating to the strike with special reference to the conduct of the officers in Dept guilty of inflicting humiliation, insult and torture on the employees.
- (6) Recognition of the Federation [of] All India Mily. Accts. Unions.

As the strike was called off unconditionally with a view not to embarrass the National Govt at a time when it needed the peace and tranquility of the country to carry on its heavy responsibility and further not to fan the flames of communal tension it is hoped that there shall be no difficulty in restoring the *status quo*. This will greatly help in obtaining the confidence, sympathy and full cooperation of all the clerks. Thanking you in anticipation.

Yours sincerely,
Damodar Swarup Seth,
Working President,
All India Federation Mily. Accts. Unions.

29. Trade Union Action Against Communal Riots

Extracts from a letter by the General Secretary, Bombay Provincial Trade Union Congress, to the Home Minister, Government of Bombay; Bombay, 23 September 1946. File No. 90; All India Trade Union Congress Papers (1946); Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

*Bombay,
23rd September 1946.*

Sir,

The Working Council of the BPTUC at its meeting held on the 21st September 1946, unanimously decided that the BPTUC should undertake to carry on educative propaganda among the working-class population in Bombay city against the communal riots. The BPTUC proposes to do this by holding meetings and by moving lorry [lorries] fitted with loudspeakers. I therefore, request you to grant the BPTUC the necessary permission in this connection.

It may be mentioned that the BPTUC is the most representative working-class organisation in the province, representing about 80 trade unions with a total membership of about 1,10,000....

Yours faithfully,
DD
General Secretary.

30. South Indian Railway Returns to Normal

Extracts from a letter by E.L. Cox, Deputy Superintendent, Government Railway Police, Trichinopoly, to the Inspector General of Police, Madras; Trichinopoly, 25 September 1946. File No. 2040; Public (General) Department, Government of Madras (1946); Tamil Nadu State Archives.

Daily Report for 25-9-1946

Conditions at Golden Rock and the Open Line are rapidly returning to absolute normal. About 480 workers of the Golden Rock Workshops who were out after the 12th rejoined in the course of yesterday and this morning after signing the required declaration forms. Strikers at outstations are resuming in large numbers and the resumption is expected to be complete in the course of tomorrow. The Administration is taking back to duty those strikers also who await trial having been charged by the Police and they will be dealt with departmentally according to Railway Rules after the disposal of the cases.

2. The running of night trains will be commenced from the night of 25/26th, and pre-strike passenger trains will be restored with effect from 26-9-46 morning....

E.L. Cox.
Dt Supt Govt Rly Police,
Trichinopoly.



31. Proposal for a Federation of Central Government Employees Unions

Letter by K.M. Sharma, Secretary, Military Finance Employees' Union, New Delhi, to Jayaprakash Narayan; Delhi, 26 September 1946. File No. 162; Jayaprakash Narayan Papers (1946); Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

*Delhi,
26th Sept., 1946.*

Sjt J.P. Narayanji,

Jai Hind. I tried to contact you on the 25th at Delhi, but unfortunately I failed. I wanted to consult you on the organisation of the central government employees. Communists and Royists are, at present, struggling hard to exploit the clerks but so far they have not achieved any considerable success. It is my ardent desire that this class is organised under Congress leadership. You are requested to take interest in this connection.

It will, perhaps, be necessary to give a brief history of the movement. There is one Imperial Secretariat Association. Due to its reactionary character this body has miserably failed to deliver the goods so much so that a vote of no confidence in its leadership was passed at a gathering of 10,000 government servants on August 2, 1946. I intend to proceed departmentally. Already I have formed a union in my department, the Military Finance Department. Unions have also been formed in some other Departments. Mrs Aruna Asaf Ali has been elected president of the Central Public Works Departments' Union. It is now proposed to bring into being a federation of the Departmental Unions under your leadership at an early date. In case you are kind enough to agree, such a federation can be brought into being in no time.

Retrenchment is now the only issue on which the temporary government servants who constitute 95% of the employees can be united. With the appointment of the Pay Commission and the decision to enforce its recommendations with effect from 1st January 1947, the question of pay and interim relief have fallen into [the] background. Retrenchment there ought to be and there must be as [the] taxpayer's money cannot be allowed to be abused. But it is the duty of each civilised government to see that none of its citizen[s] is out of job at any time.

The fight for freedom has not yet finished. The government servants if properly exploited will be a great asset to the nation in its next struggle for freedom. This is possible only if they are properly handled and organised under Congress leadership and not allowed to be exploited by the Communists and Royists who will use them against the Interim Government for their party ends. This is [the] main idea in my mind underlying the organisation of this class of our society.

It is hoped that it has become clear to you, from what I have stated above, that the organisation of this class is in [the] nation's interest. I request you kindly to guide us. Please inform if you are coming to Delhi in the near future or if it is necessary for me to see you at a place convenient for you to discuss further details. I am seeing Aruna Ji in this connection. In case you agree please also intimate the date when it will be possible for you to come to Delhi and preside over the first Session of the Federation.

Hoping for an early reply as [any] delay will be fatal to our cause.

Yours obediently,
K.M. Sharma.
Secretary,
Military Finance Employees' Unions,
New Delhi.

32. Labour Situation in the Central Provinces and Berar

Extracts from Police Abstract of Intelligence, Vol. LXI, No. 39; Nagpur, 28 September 1946. File No. 72; Political and Military Department, Government of the Central Provinces & Berar (1946); Madhya Pradesh State Archives.

Labour

A series of meetings were held at Nagpur under the auspices of the Nagpur Textile Union at which the demands of textile workers were reiterated, the Congress Ministry was criticised for supporting capitalists and audiences enjoined to launch a protest strike on the 30th September.

(b) The question of dearness allowance paid to Burn & Co.'s employees is again the cause of discontentment and a representation was sent to the Labour Commissioner. The Municipal Workers' Union, Jubbulpore, which is under Communist control, submitted a memorandum of demands to the Municipal Committee. At a public meeting held on the 25th September under the presidentship of S.D. Mukerjee, speakers criticized Congress Ministries for trying to suppress the labour movement, cited instances of repression in Madras and Bombay provinces and received a ready response in favour of a strike in reply to enquiry if they were prepared to strike in sympathy with primary schoolteachers who were on strike at Jubbulpore. On the 21st September, a procession of primary schoolteachers of Jubbulpore terminated in a public meeting at which Communist and Congress speakers congratulated teachers on their firm stand and advised them not to call off the strike till their demands were met fully.

(c) On the 19th September, a public meeting of 500 was held at Burhanpur (Nimar) under the auspices of the Tapti Mill Mazdur Sangh at which speeches were made vehemently criticising Government for sponsoring the Industrial Disputes Settlement Bill which it was alleged affected workers adversely.

(d) Municipal employees of Akola struck work on the 26th September for an increase of dearness allowance. Municipal sweepers of Shegaon (Buldana) also struck work due to the suspension of some sweepers.

33. Opposition to Proposed Industrial Relations Bill

Statement by N.M. Joshi, General Secretary, All India Trade Union Congress; Bombay, 28 September 1946. File No. 91; All India Trade Union Congress Papers (1946); Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

Bombay Government and Industrial Peace

The Bombay Government proposes shortly to pass legislation for the regulation of relations between employers and employees, for the settlement of industrial disputes and for the determination of the part which the trade unions of workers are to play in these matters. The proposed legislation reenacts with modifications the previous legislation of 1938 on the subject and adds certain new features such as compulsory arbitration and consequent illegalisation of strikes, creation of "approved unions" and the establishment of Labour Courts. Some of the modifications are an improvement even from the point of view of the opponents of the 1938 legislation but the introduction of the principle of compulsory arbitration and consequent illegalisation of strikes is the most controversial new feature of the proposed legislation.

The prevailing unrest among the industrial workers and also among other wage-earning classes has naturally attracted the attention of the Government, the employers and the public.

To remedy the unrest, we must go to [the] root cause. The wages must be immediately increased not only to restore the prewar standard of life but to raise it considerably. The end of the war has raised hopes of a better world. Not only adequate but better housing must be provided, measures for social security must be taken, protecting the workers against sickness, unemployment and unprovided for old age. The adoption of these measures should have first priority. The proposal of the Bombay Government first to take in hand the passing of legislation creating machinery for the settlement of industrial disputes is putting the cart before the horse. This machinery will not give the workers what the workers want urgently. Unfortunately, the Central Government and the Provincial Governments have given first priority for dealing with the unrest superficially by trying to create a new machinery to deal with unrest. The machinery for conciliation which has already existed since 1929 has not been adequately made use of. The Bombay Government have in addition their own legislation of 1938. It was expected they would remove its unnecessarily delaying features by a simple measure. But they now seem to be bent upon passing a more complicated and more controversial measure. During the war, the Central Government and the Provincial Governments tasted the power of making strikes illegal by compulsory arbitration and they are unwilling to part with that power. To deal with industrial unrest by adopting constructive measures for raising the standard of life of the workers and giving them social security is difficult and costly. To create machinery for making strikes illegal by providing for compulsory arbitration is less costly and makes the work of a Government easier.

The Bombay Government seem to consider that compulsory arbitration accompanied by provision for making strikes illegal is a fair measure for maintaining peace. Ordinarily if really impartial arbitration can be secured, it has its limited use. But in the first place under the present circumstances really impartial arbitrators are not available. It is not the result of the individuals who are appointed arbitrators but the class bias of the individuals who are generally appointed arbitrators is so deep-rooted though unconscious that even Sydney Webb categorically declared himself against the system as being incapable of providing fair and just awards. Moreover, the Governments which are ultimately to appoint the arbitrators are not workers' governments and are not, therefore, themselves free from class bias. Secondly, the use of the machinery of arbitration is limited in usefulness as the arbitrators have to give their awards within the limitations of the capitalist system. It is for these reasons that the British Labour Movement has never been in favour of compulsory arbitration. The Royal Commission on Indian Labour on practical grounds have also declared themselves against it. Assuming that we can secure impartial arbitrators and an impartial Government to choose them, compulsory arbitration, as shown by experience, may, at least, prevent deterioration of conditions and stabilise them as they exist. In Australia where compulsory arbitration prevails, the real wages have not gone up. Ahmedabad where the system has been voluntarily adopted by the Mazdoor Mahajan (Textile Labour Association), real wages have not only not gone up but they have deteriorated since the war. Under the present circumstances, therefore, the Indian workers cannot be expected to accept a system of compulsory arbitration involving provision to make strikes illegal. The Bombay Government is unfair in stating that workers on some occasions have asked for arbitration and implying thereby that even workers desire compulsory arbitration. Nobody can be against voluntary arbitration on those occasions on which the workers choose it. But the workers are against the system to be adopted on all occasions especially by compulsion. Under the present Defence of India Rules, the workers are under the disadvantage of strikes being made illegal by compulsory arbitration or at least, the strikes being postponed

for a long period without even the advantage of having the arbitration when they want it. It is under these circumstances that the workers sometimes ask for arbitration.

It is wrong to think that workers do not understand the loss and the risk involved in strikes. But under the present conditions, they are unwilling to part with the only weapon with which they have to fight for bettering their condition and securing all rights of human existence, risky though that weapon is.

Even the provisions of the existing Bombay Industrial Disputes Act of 1938 are not acceptable to the workers, as it postpones strikes for a long period by making them illegal during the period of conciliation. The Bombay Government and along with them many others think that there is nothing wrong in making strikes without notice illegal hardly realising that what is a civil wrong in law is thereby treated as a criminal offence and workers are made to work against their wishes during that period. This compulsion is not different from slavery. The workers accept the contractual obligation of giving notice before leaving work. But they cannot accept that breach of contract of notice can be a criminal offence which in effect makes the breach of contract of service itself an offence. This system is an indenture system and is recognised as a form of slavery. Workers, therefore, are against such legislation. Proposals for making strikes illegal are generally defended on the ground of the interests of the community. But even when slavery was defended, interests of the community were pleaded as an excuse. It is for these reasons that the British Parliament has recently repealed even the legislation making general strikes illegal. But the Bombay Government is proposing even the already reactionary clauses of the Trade Disputes Act 1929 making certain strikes illegal, to be widened so that almost any strike may be declared illegal. Fortunately for British workers, the British Parliament has a Labour majority and British Government is a Labour Government. Unfortunately for the Bombay workers, the Bombay Legislature has not a labour majority and the Bombay Government is not a Labour Government. It is said in Soviet Russia strikes are illegal. But if Soviet Russia makes work as a duty of a citizen it has given the citizens a right to be provided with work and social security which responsibility other Governments do not take upon themselves.

The Bombay Government claims that their proposals for classifying unions as Representative, Qualified, Primary and Approved are likely to facilitate Trade Union organisation—presumably on proper lines. One of the weaknesses of the present Trade Union organisations in India is that they are based upon small local areas. The strength of a Trade Union depends upon the wideness of the area it covers. A nationwide industrial union is the ideal. The present proposals of the Bombay Government will encourage its present defective structure in spite of its proposal permitting registration of unions covering more than one local area. Varying privileges conferred upon the Representative, Qualified, Primary and Approved Unions will militate against their future amalgamations or even against their forming well-knit federations. The defect of the Bill will weaken the Trade Union organisation in the country permanently.

The three main features of the Bombay Government's new legislation viz., (1) making strikes illegal, (2) compulsory arbitration and (3) recognition of four varying grades of unions, make it unacceptable, at least, highly controversial. Under the circumstances, it is difficult to understand the hurry in which the Bombay Government proposes to pass it. Let the Bill be at least circulated widely amongst the workers in the vernaculars of the Province, let the workers read, think over and come to deliberate and cool judgement on it and express it fully before the Bombay Legislature is asked to pass it. It is unpleasant but necessary to point out that a

very small proportion of the workers affected by the legislation have a vote in the election for the legislature and that the elections were held more on the political programme than on economic proposals of the Government. The least, therefore, the Government can do is to give the persons affected an opportunity and time to consider these proposals and express their considered judgment on them.

N.M. Joshi.
General Secretary, AITUC
28th Sept. '46.

3.4. Congress and Communists Battle it Out in Kanpur.

Article, 'Pant ministry declares war on Cawnpore workers'. *People's Age*, 29 September 1946.

"We want a peaceful strike, in fact we want settlement on honourable terms. But if the employers, the police and the Congress leaders attempt to disrupt the strike, the Mazdoor Sabha will fight back with all its resources and give a battle that will live through the annals of working-class history of our country."—S.S. Yusuf, Cawnpore workers' leader, September 15.

Cawnpore is writing a new page in the history of our national struggle, a page glorious as any heroic working-class action can make it glorious, against police terror, mass arrests, etc. And yet, dark also, as any persistent disruption by Congress leaders and volunteers can make it dark, what with beating[s], backlegging, lies, etc.

Over 30,000 workers from its textile mills and its tanneries are on strike. The bosses — White and Black—are refusing to grant them a better wage, adequate DA [Dearness Allowance], bonus, etc. With the bosses is shamelessly lined up the entire Congress leadership of Cawnpore.

Over 100 workers and Trade Unionists have so far been arrested, and as Dr Jawaharlal, Congress MLA, put it, "What has happened up to now is just nothing. You just wait and see!"

It started with the JK Mills. On August 22, these workers came on strike for the third time in four months. Twice previously they were betrayed by their Congress leaders. They were fighting against the speed up in machinery and change in working hours.

On August 26, night-shift workers of the Muir Mills came out. The white bosses would offer the Id pay only to the Muslims and not to all as was the workers' demand. Then there was the enforced idleness due to lack of bobbins, waiting for hours in queue in sun or rain to receive wages, etc.

The bosses relied on Congress leaders to do their job and demanded unconditional withdrawal of the strike. The workers replied by demanding unconditional acceptance of their just demands. And the whole mill came out.

The Congress leaders now moved. At the workers' back and over their heads, Shri Ganga Sahay Chaube approached the Labour Commissioner. Later, he announced that a 'settlement' had been arrived at and that the mill would reopen on September 2.

He thought he had the inherent right to lead the men. But the workers thought otherwise.

Red Guards Organised

On September 1, 10,000 of them met at the Parade Grounds and decided to continue the strike. Should the police start arresting, lathi charge, etc., they would reply with a general strike.

As an earnest [indication] of their determination, hundreds of them enrolled themselves in the Red Guards and kept an all-night vigil on the roads leading to the mill. Next morning not a soul went in to work.

In vain did the White boss wait at the gate for the Congress leaders to help him start his mill. He fretted and fumed, even abused the "Sala Congresswalla" who had given him, the owner, a false promise. But the Congresswalla did not come. The mill would not start.

But Chaube and Rajaram Shastri (Congress Socialist) were not men to accept defeats thus! On September 6, they again announced that the owners had accepted the demands and that the mill would be opened on September 9. A 'mass meeting' also was announced for September 8 at Phool Baugh.

But Phool Baug on the 8th saw no worker coming to attend the mass meeting. So Rajaram Shastri hurriedly organised another meeting at Gwaltoli.

For him no stick was apparently bad enough to beat the underdog. He took the help of an owner's stooge. But even then only 25 people came. And worse still, even these 25 refused to withdraw the strike!

At the other end, on the Parade Ground, 10,000 workers gathered under the Red Flag, once again to declare their resolve to continue the strike. Again that night, hundreds of Red Guards kept vigil on the approaches to the mill. Again next morning the mill gates remained open, but none stepped in, though this time enough terror effect was sought to be created by the police practically laying siege to the mill.

Despite all efforts of the Press to blackout this struggle, despite all efforts of the Congress leaders to crush it the strike wave spread. On September 13, 10,000 workers of the Swadeshi Mill came out. They demanded immediate settlement of the Muir and JK Mills strikes, demanded wage increase and increase in DA for themselves, demanded withdrawal of Katju's (Labour Minister) Black Bill.

To Mill Boss's Aid

No sooner did the Congress leaders hear of this, than they rushed to the mill boss, the notorious black marketeer Rai Bahadur Rameshwar Prasad Bagla. Rumours are thick in Cawnpore that promises of some 'help' were made by Bagla Seth if the Congress leaders would 'help' him out.

On the 14th, the Swadeshi Mili gate presented a sight that Cawnpore workers will never forget. 1,000 Congress 'volunteers' were already at the gates since 4 a.m. There also stood along with them, in common cause, 1000 policemen and 200 armed police.

This force was led by the joint High Command of eminent Congress leaders like Shri Ganga Sahay Chaube, R.D. Trivedi, Jog, Dr Jawaharlal, Yadunath Sinha, Pyarelal Agarwal, and last but not the least, the DSP. At the head were the leaders and the police boss in police cars; the rear was taken up by the volunteers, wearing tricolour badges, also in police lorries.

Mind you, there was Section 144 in Cawnpore. And yet all the 'volunteers' carried lathis. At the gates, the workers, however, were being forcibly deprived of their flagpoles.

Immediately, they came on the scene the 'volunteers' shouted, "Go back to work! Else there will be dire consequences. Your heads will be smashed! You will rot in jails, your children, outside."

But the workers refused to be terrorised. Not one would go in.

Joint Lathi Charge

That was too much! The leaders conferred and at once the policemen and Congress volunteers jointly charged! The Red Guards were singled out for attack. Harish a student leader, was caught hold of by two sepoys and Congress volunteers then had a go at him. Avadh Behari was first beaten up by the 'volunteers', then arrested and handed over to the police.

And yet the workers did not flinch. Rather they defended themselves and beat back the assault so well that the police and the volunteers had to take shelter inside the mill compound till nightfall.

The Congress leaders too, with the armed police, kept at a respectable distance inside the mill compound and indulged in filthy abuses. Yusuf, the most popular leader of Cawnpore, challenged them to come out and face the workers. But, of course, they would not condescend to accept his challenge.

Bagla now saw the failure of his friends and expressed himself for settlement. But with their ear close to the boss, the Congress leaders got the scent of it. "Give us one more chance," they pleaded. "If you settle with the Mazdoor Sabha, that will be an end of our labour work," they argued and the boss saw the point.

On Sunday the 15th, another meeting was called. Meanwhile to be better able to concentrate on the Swadeshi Mill, a settlement was forced on the JK Mill workers. But only 50 workers attended the Congress leaders' meeting and it was over in seven minutes, Chaube not wanting to do anything unless at least 700 workers came!

Workers Undaunted

At the other end, in the Parade Grounds, 25,000 workers gathered under the Red Flag. With clenched fists, they declared their resolve to fight unto victory, no matter what terror was let loose on them. Try repression and we shall reply with a general strike, they thundered.

Next day, under heavy police protection, the Congress Labour leaders rushed in about 100 blacklegs to the Swadeshi and Muir Mills. The workers replied by further strikes in the Cawnpore Cotton, Victoria and Lal Imli Mills. On the 17th 15,000 tannery workers of Cooper and Allen came out. So did the workers of tanneries in Jajmu.

It was a smashing reply and it sent the District Magistrate and the City Police into panic. They entered on a mad campaign of arrests. Till that noon in all 129 worker and student leaders were arrested. The Press gave out only the District Magistrate's version that the arrested men were "inciting the workers to mob violence."

Curtain of Censorship

A curtain of censorship today hangs over Cawnpore. No news of police repression is allowed to leak out. It is reported that some of the most trusted leaders of the workers like Sone Lal, Chacha Jan Mahommed, the Grand Old Man of Cawnpore's working-class movement, Anand Madho and others of the Mazdoor Sabha, Shiv Sharma, leader of the tannery workers and others are arrested. So are student leaders like Sultan Niazi, Sadri and Khetan.

Chaturvedi, *People's Age* correspondent has been arrested too. Santosh Kapoor was arrested from his sickbed. Warrants are pending against Yusuf, President, Mazdoor Sabha; Kali Shanker, Secretary, District [Communist] Party Committee, Vijay Bahadur, leather workers' leader, Ram Asrey, General Secretary, Provincial Students' Federation. The office of the District Committee of the Communist Party was raided and 12 people there found inside were put under arrest including some kisans from the Unnao District.

Section 144 is being vigorously enforced. Cawnpore since Tuesday is not safe for any Communist to step in, though the Party is formally legal here, where two members of the Congress Working Committee are among the Ministers.

And yet the strike is being fought out as firmly as before against all the terror that a popular Ministry could let loose against men who returned them to office and in the service of the White and Swadeshi bosses, whose black market record can put to shame any of their colleagues elsewhere.

35. Giridih Miners Give Strike Notice

Extracts from an article, 'No coal for Railway Board from September 24'. *People's Age*, 29 September 1946.

Giridih is on the warpath, Giridih with its 17,000 coal miners. On and from September 24, the Railway Board which manages these mines will have no delivery of Giridih's black diamond.

With nothing but victory to their record, a hundred per cent membership on their rolls, the Red flag to lead them, these 17,000 workers led by the Colliery Workers' Union (CWU) have been demanding the same service conditions from the Railway Board as they offer to their other employees....

36. Municipal Workers' Strikes Reviewed

Article, 'India's municipal workers on the march'. *People's Age*, 29 September 1946.

The strikes of the municipal workers have followed the all India strikes of the postal employees, clerks, railwaymen, etc.

Part of the general strike wave, these strikes have a special importance. Municipal workers are among the most backward and downtrodden sections of our people. Their new consciousness and militancy to wield the strike weapon in order to win their demands is a glaring testimony to the general determination of our people to end the present state of affairs and win life and liberty.

At first the battles were fought at big centres, Ahmedabad, Calcutta, Bombay. Then a spate of strikes spread over big and small centres all over the country. The biggest of these strikes at Delhi, Madras and the Province-wide strikes in Andhra have been successfully fought under the leadership of the Communist Party.

Basic Demands

The basic demands of these strikers are almost similar. They are wage increase; dearness allowance; house allowance; uniforms; leave with pay; maternity benefit; free medical service; provident fund; and pension.

The municipal workers received a paltry wage of Rs 6 to Rs 13 per month (varying at different places) and a dearness allowance of Rs 6 to Rs 10. That has been their lot throughout the war.

The mere fact that they have had to strike for these demands shows that they have not secured even the most elementary rights and benefits, though they render efficiently such essential and vital service to our everyday life.

The municipal workers at many centres have shown considerable initiative by demanding 'unclean' allowance, provision for free compulsory education, recognition of trade unions, representation of workers in the municipalities, etc.

For four months after the advent of popular ministries they waited patiently hoping to get a square deal. In most cases they explored all avenues in order to arrive at a peaceful settlement. After prolonged efforts they were invariably forced to resort to strike. And they did strike. For they were in a mood to 'fight it out', determined to end their present lot—and win their demands.

Almost everywhere there was general public support for them. The Delhi strikers were congratulated both by the Provincial Congress and the League for remaining peaceful and disciplined.

The popular Ministries did not make any effort to bring about a just settlement. On the contrary, repression was resorted to do suppress the strikers. The Congress Ministries in the UP and Madras did not lag behind the Delhi White Sahibs in their efforts to break the strikes by lathi charges and arrests of union leaders. The Madras Congress Ministry instituted punitive measures to terrorise the workers and break their morale.

Though so many strikes had broken out almost simultaneously they were almost all local battles. There was no coordinated activity nor any sort of central guidance even on a regional or Provincial basis.

Biggest Fights in Andhra

The best organised strikes were fought in Andhra. The 10,000 municipal workers of more than 28 places formulated their common demands and elected a Central Strike Committee. All struck on the same day and fought strenuously winning substantial gains despite heavy odds and severest repression by the Prakasam Ministry.

The best instances of working-class solidarity comes from Madras city. The strike of 10,000 workers of the Municipal Corporation was a prolonged one. The Corporation continued to remain adamant and the Congress Ministry used its coercive machinery to the full. By organising a one-day general strike in protest, the Madras working-class successfully intervened in favour of the municipal workers, thereby strengthening working-class solidarity all the more.

37. Labour Report from Bengal

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Bengal for the second half of September 1946. File No. 18/9/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Labour

The strike at Burnpur continues though no incidents have occurred in connexion with it. The colliery strike in Asansol subdivision, referred to in the last report has ended.

A serious incident occurred at the works of Messrs Guest, Keen and Williams, Howrah, when the Works Manager was severely assaulted by some of the workers, an action which resulted in the closure of the workshop for an indefinite period.

The tea garden area continues to be somewhat disturbed and the Rajshahi Commissioner, referring to unrest, rioting and a strike on three different gardens in his Division, emphasises that the whole problem of the tea garden labour requires the careful attention of the Labour Commissioner. At the moment there is not uniformity of labour conditions; there are frequent

allegations of corruption against senior garden employees; every management pursues its own policy and in fact there are plenty of grievances which are at present being effectively used by agitators.

38. No Improvement in Labour Situation in the United Provinces

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for the United Provinces for the second half of September 1946. File No. 18/9/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Labour

The labour position showed no improvement over that of the previous weeks, and the activities of labour leaders, in particular from amongst the Communists, achieved the required results for a short time in Cawnpore. Here the strikes were far more political than economic, and more than 20,000 workers were involved at the same time. Strong action on the part of the district authorities became necessary to prevent the situation from going out of hand when Communists and their rivals for the leadership of labour came to blows. Some 80 persons had to be arrested for stone throwing and other forms of assault and a few persons were detained for subversive activity. This action had the effect of bringing the trouble to an end for the time being.

The strike of the Lucknow scavengers belongs properly to the fortnight under report but was dealt with by me in my previous report. Elsewhere, in Allahabad, Firozabad, Shikohabad, Hathras and Saharanpur Communists and others continued to foment industrial unrest, creating artificial discontent where previously there had been none, exaggerating small grievances and organizing strikes on the most flimsy pretexts. Five strike notices were received during the fortnight, and it has to be seen whether these actually materialise.

The period saw the end of the strike of the employees of the Imperial Bank, but an unfortunate sign of the times is the unrest among certain classes of Government servants. The strike of Canal patrols, amins and tube-well operators in the western portion of the Province was not settled during the period under review. The irresponsible nature of some of the labour leaders is well shown by the demands put up by the Motor Drivers' Union of Lucknow. These include a minimum pay of Rs 1.0 per mensem plus dearness allowance at 100 per cent and leave concessions that amount to the astonishing figure of 8½ months in the year.

39. Future Labour Trouble Not Ruled Out in the Punjab

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for the Punjab for the second half of September 1946. File No. 18/9/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Labour

With the return of the staff of the Imperial Bank to work, and in the absence of any fresh dispute resulting in the cessation of labour, the Province for the first time for months is free from strikes of any importance. The future prospect, however, remains clouded by threats of strikes, in some cases by Government's servants, and by the acute discontent which continues to exist in the labour world. In such circumstances uninterrupted immunity from further trouble cannot reasonably be expected.

40. Agreements Reached with Strikers in Bihar

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Bihar for the second half of September 1946. File No. 18/9/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Labour

The Imperial Bank strike was called off during the fortnight, but the most important item was the agreement reached between Professor Abdul Bari and the Directors of Tatas. Professor Bari has scored an immense success as the Company has agreed to pay 4 months' pay as bonus this year which is far more than the Union had expected and in future 22½ [per cent] of the net profits will be paid to the workers. A grade system in the works on which the Company's financial experts have been engaged for nearly a year has also been established. So far as the Tatanagar Foundry dispute is concerned, Government issued orders for the reopening of the Foundry by the 27th September and for the dispute to be referred for adjudication. It is reported that there was a threat of a strike notice on the Cable Company's management towards the end of the month, but a settlement has been reached in respect of China Clay Mines. The strike in the Giridih coalfields which was postponed till the 24th September organised by the CPI was almost a complete failure as at least 70 per cent of the workers attended work and the strike was called off after a few hours. There is however, possibility of trouble later and also in the Bermo coalfield over the poor quality of rice supplied. The strike in the Diamond Tista Colliery, Dhanbad, mentioned in the last report, terminated on the promise of better quality rations.

Labour in the Bhagwati Hosiery Mills, Bhagalpur, went on strike on the 16th September under the auspices of the Congress Socialist Party and the strike continues. In the Muktapur Jute Mills, Samastipur, there were short strikes first of the labour and, when they returned, of the clerical staff and darwans. There was also a strike for a few days in the Saran Engineering Works, Marhowrah, and this has also been referred for adjudication. The Patna Electric Company employees were due to go on strike on the 16th October, but have now postponed it to the 30th November. The Secretary of the PWD Workers' Union is also said to be serving a strike notice on Government for a strike to start on the 1st November. Sweepers in Madhubani, Darbhanga district, went on strike from the 15th September at the instigation of the CPI and so did those of Madhupur in the Santal Parganas....

41. Communist Sponsored Strikes Spread in CP and Berar

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for the Central Provinces and Berar for the second half of September 1946. File No. 18/9/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Labour

There is a veritable epidemic of strikes amongst sweepers; strikes of a lightning description have been reported from various centres, particularly in Berar, e.g., there was a Communist-sponsored strike of sweepers at Ellichpur; the sweepers of Akola resolved to go on strike if their demand for increased allowances was not met; the Murtizapur, Shegaon and Malkapur sweepers went on strike but returned to work at the instance of the local authorities. The sweepers of Khamgaon and Mekhar are also giving trouble.

The CP Mineworkers Union resolved to observe one day protest strike on a day to be fixed, as no satisfactory reply had been received from the Government and the mine owners to the demands and grievances put forward by the workers. The workers of the Damua and Kalichhapar collieries belonging to the CP Syndicate Ltd struck about the middle of September, but resumed work pending settlement of the dispute. The drivers and other employees of the Natwar Transport Company of Nagpur, an omnibus company, went on strike and offered satyagraha, when the management attempted to carry on their business with the help of others, by laying down on the road in front of the vehicles. But a report has just come in to show that they have agreed to resume work as a consequence of the appointment of a committee of arbitration.

The Communists continue their subversive propaganda. Their leader, Om Prakash Mehta, who is being prosecuted for distributing pamphlets advising strikers to manhandle loyal workers, was released on bail. The Communists are also making a bid for capturing the Nagpur Textile Union, a comparatively moderate body under the presidentship of Mr Ruikar MLA by taking advantage of his temporary absence abroad.

The cotton mill operatives in Nagpur gave notice of their intention to go on strike with effect from the 30th September. It was first feared that while one section would insist on working the other would keep out; but luckily this has not transpired and all decided on keeping away and nothing untoward happened.

Peons of Government officers who formed a Union under the auspices of the Communist Party have been told that if they desired to form a Union they should elect one of themselves as President and another as Secretary and that Government would have nothing to do with a Communist-inspired Union.

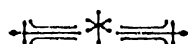
42. Labour Situation Uneasy in Assam Tea Gardens and Oilfields

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Assam for the second half of September 1946. File No. 18/9/46; *Home* (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Labour

The situation at Chhatak and on many tea gardens remains uneasy. A serious incident took place at Santok tea estate in Sibsagar district, where the Manager appears to have tried a high-handed method of dealing with a strike caused by discontent over lack of food and cloth supplies, and on the second day drew the weapon from his sword-stick [a cane in which a sword is concealed] in face of a gathering of labourers which he regarded as menacing and killed one of the foremost, afterwards using, and allowing a clerk to use, a shotgun with the result that several of them were wounded by pellets.

An organisational meeting was held at Digboi, at which many of the celebrities of the 1939 strike were present, and it is reported that the Congress leaders are somewhat anxious lest this should again make the oilfields a focal point for engineered discontent.



43. Aruna Asaf Ali Elected President of CPWD Clerks Union

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Delhi for the second half of September 1946. File No. 18/9/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Labour

The firm action taken against a number of Communists in Delhi for deliberately trying to stir up labour trouble has had a good effect and there has been a decrease in labour unrest in the last few weeks. The Communist leaders of various Unions are now showing signs of being a little more inclined to accept reasonable solutions of their demands but there are still a few hotheads whose one and only aim is to foment trouble, and the same applies to some Congress Socialists. Mrs Aruna Asaf Ali has just been elected President of a Union formed by CPWD clerks.

3.A.x October

1. Amalner Martyr's Day

Extracts from an article, 'Amalner workers can never be crushed'. *People's Age*, 13 October 1946.

Amalner on September 27, once more defied police ban, defied the police terror that only a month ago had claimed as victims nine of its best sons.

The workers were observing the day in response to the call of the BPTUC. Nine of their leaders were killed, 69 others like Arjun Timaji lay wounded, others still like Narvane were in jail. While yet many more like Bhagwat had cases pending against them. But when was the Red worker held back by these things?

True to the martyrs, their city that day was bedecked with Red flags. Banners bearing the names of the martyrs flew from all the lanes and houses in this working-class city. Over 3000 Red flags flew from housetops hurling defiance at the accursed police terror.

Memorial to Martyrs

A mighty memorial stood in honour of the heroes in front of the Communist Party Office, exactly on the spot where the martyrs had dyed the Red flag with their own blood. The offices of the Union's Ward Committees, the houses where the martyrs once lived were beflagged with Red flags and banners....

2. AITUC's International Contacts

Extracts from a copy of a letter, 19 October 1946, by R.A. Khedgikar, on behalf of the General Secretary, All India Trade Union Congress, to George Frank, BWIU, Melbourne, Australia. File No. 35; All India Trade Union Congress Papers (1946); Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

... The birth of socialism in the USSR has been an inspiration and a guiding spirit for the working-class as a whole and for the Indian working class in particular. It is a matter of pride that the USSR has stood the test of the Great War and has been the main factor in defeating

the Fascist aggression and has saved the world from the serious consequences of the Fascist movement. We heartily join you in celebrating the 29th anniversary of the USSR.

Our movement was started in 1920 and is gaining strength stage by stage in spite of serious repression from the Government as well as the employers. We are not yet free from the imperialist hold, though the working-class of India has played an important part in the freedom movement of the country. We are fully aware that mere freedom from foreign rule would not bring us real freedom and we are working for the early establishment of a Socialist Republic in this country, in which we hope the sympathy and cooperation of the world working-class movement would be forthcoming.

Like other countries India has also suffered seriously as a result of the Second World War. Our task is not easy. We have to regain not only what we have lost during the war but to change the whole system of the society and we fully agree with the sentiments expressed in your letter....

The aims and objects of our organisation are:

- (a) To establish Socialist State in India.
- (b) To socialise and nationalise the means of production, distribution and exchange as far as possible.
- (c) To ameliorate the economic and social conditions of the working classes.
- (d) To watch, promote, safeguard and further the interests, rights and privileges of the workers in all matters relating to their employment.
- (e) To secure and maintain for the workers:
 - (1) Freedom of speech;
 - (2) The freedom of press;
 - (3) The freedom of association;
 - (4) The freedom of assembly;
 - (5) The right to strike and
 - (6) The right to work or maintenance.
- (f) To support and actively participate in the struggle for India's political freedom, from the point of view of the working classes.
- (g) To coordinate the activities of the Labour Unions affiliated to the AITUC.
- (h) To abolish political or economic advantage based on caste, creed, community, race or religion.

The All India Trade Union Congress was started in 1920 with a membership of 48,937. The present strength of our organisation is 5,02,890 with 428 Trade Unions from all parts of India affiliated to it.

We have undertaken to improve the conditions of the working-class in respect of short hours, full pay holidays, provident fund, security of service, health insurance, etc. Our representatives are fighting on all fronts including the Provincial and Central Legislatures....

3. Giridih Miners Down Tools

Extracts from an article, 'Giridih coal mine strikers wage relentless battle'. *People's Age*, 27 October 1946.

Since October 9, the Railway Board's coal mines at Giridih (Bihar) have ceased to work. Fifteen thousand miners are already on strike. Workers of all pits, all quarries and of the workshop have downed tools.

In a few days it is possible that the strike will extend to the forty thousand coal miners of the railway collieries at Bokaro....

3.A.xi November

1. Communalism in Kanpur's Labour Ranks

Extracts from Weekly Report No. 42, 1 November 1946. CID Records, Government of the United Provinces (1946); Uttar Pradesh State Archives.

... New strikes have been reported of Sugar Mill employees at Muzaffarnager, sweepers at Etawah and compounders at Kheri. Communalism is appearing in the ranks of labourers at Cawnpore....

2. Bombay Government's Statement Regarding Amalner Firing

Copy of press statement by Gulzarilal Nanda, Labour Minister, Government of Bombay; 1 November 1946. File No. 11; All India Trade Union Congress Papers (1946); Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

There have been different versions in various newspapers regarding the incidents that led to firing on mill workers Amalner on the 27th August 1946 and also on the extent of firing. The object of this press note is to lay before the public some facts that have been reported to Government by officers on duty as also by eyewitnesses to the unfortunate incident of the 27th. On the 2nd February 1946, one Sheklal Nathu, a worker in the Frame Department of the mill behaved rudely with his superior. The Supervisor complained about the behaviour of the said worker to the manager who asked the worker to express regret for his conduct and go back to work. The worker refused to do so and walked out of the mill. The case was brought before the GLO [Government Labour Officer], Jalgaon on 26.2.46 by the representative of the Amalner Girni Kamgar Union. An inquiry was held in the presence of the union representatives and the GLO asked the worker to express regret for the incident. The GLO advised the mill to reinstate the worker after he expressed the regret and pay him in full for the loss he suffered. The union advised the worker not to express regret promising him that they would fight the case before the Conciliator. The case came up before the Conciliator and failure was reported as the Conciliator thought that the stand taken by the mill authorities was not unreasonable. The union thereupon served a notice of strike on this issue on the 23rd July 1946 under Defence of India Rule 81-A after the report of the Conciliator was published in the BGG [Bombay Government Gazette?]. The copy of the notice of strike reached the Labour Office on the 8th August 1946 because of the postal strike but the workers of the Frame Department had already declared a sit-down strike on the previous day, as a result of which the mill had to be closed long before this strike took place, the District Magistrate (East Khandesh) had been viewing the situation at Amalner (when the mill worked generally and when the workers were on strike in particular) with great concern. The speeches made by the union officials as reported to him by the police appeared to be very offensive not only for the management who were the direct targets of the verbal attacks by the union but also to Government officials. Experience during the past strike showed that there was a grave danger to public peace if the verbal attacks by the union officials were allowed to continue. An order

under 144 CrPC was therefore promulgated by the District Magistrate banning the meetings, etc., on the 8th August 1946 in the municipal limits of Amalner. Unhampered by this order, the union started propagating its views with a view to incite workers to violence in meetings just outside the municipal limits of Amalner and held out all kinds of treats [threats] not only against mill management but also against Government officials. Some of the union officials were warned against their activities by the District Magistrate (EK) but such warnings fell flat on them.

Simultaneously, with these union meetings at Amalner, the union officials had been holding consultations with the ministers concerned, HM (Labour) and HM (Home and Revenue) with a view to appoint [an] arbitrator and to withdraw 144 and they were assured by the HM (Labour) that the needful would be done re arbitration. HM (Home) told them that the order cannot be withdrawn until the tension lasted. The Commissioner of Labour inquired by wire whether the mill would agree to [an] arbitrator and on the receipt of a telegram from the mill a similar telegram was sent to the union. In the meanwhile, however, the local union leaders by their irresponsible and unbalanced speeches had incited the workers to such a pitch of mob frenzy that the workers could not help itching for direct action which was planned in a private meeting of the union on the 27th August. The news of this intended direct action reached DSP (EK) who was at Jalgaon and he proceeded to Amalner to watch the situation. The procession of workers about 3000 strong paraded the highways of Amalner and came to the heart of town and the union officials staged a meeting on the main street and started on[e] of their usual harangues. The DSP argued with a couple of the inciters to wind up their speeches and also warned them about the consequences of their illegal actions but to no effect. On the other hand one of the speakers incited the mob to hammer the police and some blows were actually received by the policemen on duty. As the situation was getting out of control two shots were fired in the air but these could not disperse the crowd and the danger to the policemen became all the more serious. Under the circumstances the mob had to be fired at and as a result of this firing 10 persons died and about 25 were injured.

The foregoing review of the events clearly shows that the persons who are shouting the loudest for [against] the unfortunate happening, are alone responsible for the situation they are in at present. The pictures painted by the some of the newspapers to the effect that Comrade Shripat Patil, the General Secretary of the Union was caught hold of by two policemen and was shot by DSP in the stomach and that the DSP also aimed a shot at one Mr Bhagwat, another active worker of the union, but the lady [?] was saved by the vigilance of a comrade who paid dearly for this gigilance [vigilance] are not borne out by facts. The public is therefore requested not to be led away by false propaganda carried [out] on behalf of the interested parties.

3. Bombay Provincial TUC Registers Disapproval of Industrial Relations Bill

Resolution adopted by Bombay Provincial Trade Union Committee; 1 November 1946. File No. 72; All India Trade Union Congress Papers (1946); Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

Industrial Relations Bill

The BPTUC strongly disapproves of the Industrial Relations Bill as introduced by the Government of Bombay in view of the fact that the Bill is based on the foundations of the Bombay Industrial Dispute Act of 1938 to which the BPTUC took strong objection. In the

considered opinion of the BPTUC, one of the strongest objections to the Bill is the introduction of the principle of compulsory arbitration, accompanied by the prohibition of strikes, which principle is detrimental to the interest of the working-class.

2. The Industrial Relations Bill, by providing for possibility of more than one union in the same industry or undertaking, makes room for rivalry among trade union[s]. By giving Government approval and recognition only to those unions who agree to give up the right to strike, the Bill militates against the interests of the free and genuine trade union movement. By maintaining Labour Officers even where workers have formed their own trade unions and by not compelling the employers into recognition of such unions and collective bargaining with them, by imposing compulsory conciliation and declaring strikes illegal undertaken against compulsory award which may be against [the] workers' interests, the Industrial Relations Bill hampers the growth of a genuine trade union movement.

3. The main object of introducing the Bill is stated to be the necessity of maintaining peace in industry. The BPTUC desires to point out that to avoid strikes, one must go to the root cause. An all-round improvement in the working and living conditions of the labouring-class, including the grant of decent living wage, provisions for proper housing and the introduction of social security measures, alone will establish peace in industry.

4. This meeting of the BPTUC therefore requests the government of Bombay to immediately legislate for minimum living wage and decent working conditions; and in view of the fundamental drawbacks in the Industrial Relations Bill as pointed out, this meeting urges upon the Government of Bombay not to pass the Bill into an Act and to amend the Bill in the light of the criticism made above. This meeting further wishes to record that if the Bill is made into an Act without the above fundamental changes it will not be acceptable to the trade union movement.

4. Railway Board Concedes to Giridih Strikers

Extracts from an article, 'Giridih miners' glorious victory'. *People's Age*, 3 November 1946.

Giridih's miners have won. After 19 days' strike, during which the Indian railways did not receive a single lump of coal, the White sahibs of New Delhi's Railway Board, already badly badgered by the SIR strikers, have been compelled to concede a number of the major demands of the strikers and refer others to special enquiry committees....

5. Tribulations of the Conciliation Officer for Bihar

Extracts from a letter by V.M. Shah, Conciliation Officer for Bihar, Department of Labour, Government of India, to Jayaprakash Narayan; Jamadoba, 9 November 1946. File No. 152; Jayaprakash Narayan Papers (1946); Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

*Jamadoba,
9th November 46.*

My Dear Jayaprakashji,

As I understand, the situation still remains explosive enough. Prof. Bari in his last address at Jealgora assured the labour, that he would call for a colossal mass strike over the whole

coalfield. It remains to be seen, what is going to be the effect of the Trade Disputes Act which is being introduced in the Assembly now. The other labour legislations which are likely to be carried out, may, perhaps, alleviate some of the important grievances of the labour.

But the fact remains, that nobody can deny the necessity of a strong and good union in every labour area. What I have been noticing today here in this coalfield, that after the advent of Prof. Bari, every important Congressman connected with the Distt. Congress Committee or the Provincial Congress Committee, has, perhaps, become a government by himself or an institution by himself.

My attachment to Socialist Party and to the local leaders is now adequately known to Prof. Bari and he has already informed me that he would not feel happy unless he saw that I was out of Bihar.

Intimidation and coercion has already started against me. Anonymous letters and false petitions, right up to Jagjivan Ram and to the Head of my Department are the natural result of it. I cannot imagine to what extent I may be coerced in future.

Mukut Babu and Mr Sharma and others, all are aware of it. One Mr Phani Babu, the accredited agent of Prof. Bari, who is living very close to my bungalow, has been entrusted with the task of ousting me out of Jamadoba. It is not so pleasant and happy for me to give you the picture of agonies I am passing through at the moment....

Yours sincerely,
V.M. Shah.

6. Jagjivan Ram Introduces Trade Dispute Act in Central Assembly

Editorial, 'Withdraw anti-strike bill'. *People's Age*, 10 November 1946.

Mr Jagjivan Ram, Labour Member of the Interim Government, introduced in the Central Assembly last week, an innocuous looking measure which seeks to provide "for the investigation and settlement of industrial disputes", but which, in reality, attacks the workers', right to direct action and strike in the unequal battle between Capital and Labour.

Mr Jagjivan Ram himself confessed that the measure only embodied the principles of Section 81-A of the hated Defence of India Rules. That the Government led by Pandit Nehru should find nothing more democratic and original than the perpetuation of a wartime, anti-working-class measure betokens a vitiated outlook towards labour and wanton disregard of working-class interests.

The Bill provides for compulsory conciliation in public utility services and optional conciliation in the case of other industrial establishments. It seeks to make illegal in public utility services including railway, tram, water-transport, etc., and in any industry which may be declared to be a public utility by the Provincial and Central Governments.

Dictatorial Powers

The Government is thus armed with dictatorial powers to forbid strikes not only in public utility services proper, but in any industry, and to impose arbitration on the workers.

The arbitrators' award, whether it sanctions retrenchment, wage-cuts or refuses any just demand of the workers, is binding on the workers and they must accept it.

This is what the Labour Member calls an “authoritative attempt to regulate the relations between the employer and the workers”. This is how the Congress guards the workers’ right to strike, so loudly proclaimed in the election manifesto.

What does the Government offer in exchange for the prohibition of strikes? The illusory and farcical provision of compulsory arbitration. Will arbitration defend the right of the workers? Will it give them a square deal and curb the profiteering greed of the employers? Not in the least. For the simple question is: On what principle, on the basis of which law is the arbitrator to arbitrate between Capital and Labour?

So long as the law of the land does not lay down that the worker is entitled to a living wage, that he is entitled to security of employment and right of employment, that he is entitled to Provident Fund, etc.,—so long will the arbitrator, who is drawn from the same class as the employers, accept the criterion of profits—or, as the capitalists put it, industry’s capacity to pay—and reject all fundamental demands of the workers.

Assurance to Capitalists

To impose compulsory arbitration on the workers is to assure the capitalist class that the workers will not be allowed to use the pressure of direct action, and they can do what they like with them. To impose such arbitration in the absence of any fundamental law protecting the workers, is to assure the capitalists that arbitration is only a formality through which they must go to impose worsening conditions on the workers. This is the international experience of all arbitrations where it is made compulsory, and the workers are deprived of the right to strike.

No one, and least of all the labour movement, demands that the State, and especially a democratic government should not intervene in industrial disputes and should not undertake legislation to minimise and settle them. But such intervention must protect the exploited against the exploiter; and must be a means to remove the evils of social inequality inherent in a system in which a small possessing class owns all the means of production, and imposes barbarous economic conditions on the workers.

Behind the Strike-wave

There is no doubt that every section of the Indian working-class is today being drawn into the strike battles and that big conflicts loom ahead if proper measures are not taken.

What is behind this unrest? The Imperialist exploitation of the war period, the insatiable greed of the Indian capitalists, who have made colossal profits out of the sweat and toil of our people, and the rising cost of living which the Government is yet unable to control. The consequent deterioration in workers’ standard of living, and the refusal of the greedy profiteers to let go even part of the huge profits to improve workers’ conditions is leading to strikes.

Those who honestly want to legislate for industrial peace, those who are not out to crush the struggle of the exploited workers in the name of industrial peace, must therefore, embark upon drastic legislation for protecting the minimum rights of workers, such as living wage, full compensation against the rise in the cost of living and the right to employment.

That will be a real democratic method of State intervention, tackling the root cause of strikes and minimising them. If dispute arise in spite of this, they can, with the consent of both parties, be referred to any agreed tribunal.

Rally Against the Bill

The new Bill is a menace to the Trade Union movement and the interests of the working-class. If the Bill is allowed to become law—an effective defence of working-class interests will become impossible. In the coming period, when the working-class will be faced with mass retrenchment, wage-cuts, etc., the provisions of the Bill will be utilised to put the label of illegality on every action of the working-class and crush it.

It is a measure which openly helps the capitalist class and must be fought by the entire Trade Union movement. All the Trade Unions must rally their members to protest against the new Bill and demand its withdrawal and its replacement by provisions guaranteeing living wage and other rights.

The Bill is a menace to the democratic movement of the Indian people. It shows the strength of the influence exercised by the vested interests over the Interim Government—an influence which must be fought, if the Congress is to be saved from disgrace and its strength not exploited to crush one section after another.

Indians cannot march to freedom and democracy unless the rights of every section are preserved and the vested interests are curbed. To allow the Bill to pass will be a triumph for the British Imperialists, who see in the developing working-class struggles one of their main enemies which they want to crush at all costs. Congressmen and Leaguers alike must demand of their leaders that they should drop the measure and introduce one which will give protection to the workers and not to the capitalists.

7. Strike Diary (15–31 October 1946)

Featured column, 'Strike diary (October 15 to 31).' *People's Age*, 10 November 1946.

Textiles

Hathras

4000 workers of the Bijli Mills and Ramchandra Cotton Mills are on strike from August 11. UP Government has done nothing about the strike for over 2½ months.

Bhilwara (Mewar State)

The strike of Mewar Textiles Mill workers ended on October 8 after a week's complete strike. 1500 affected. All the dismissed workers including the President of the Mill Mazdoor Sangh (Local HMSS) reinstated.

Trichur

Workers of Sitaram Mills staged a stay-in-strike demanding full wages for Onam vacation and protesting against requisition of advances in one lump. After 7 hours' strike, they won the demands.

Later a Mistry beat a worker. Workers went in for another stay-in-strike and staged demonstrations inside and outside the mills.

The Mistry and worker were suspended. An enquiry was conducted by the Conciliation committee. The worker was found not guilty and reinstated.

Calcutta

2500 workers of Rampuria Cotton Mills, Serampore, are on strike from October 14, for wage-increase.

Workers of the Spinning Department of Bangalakshmi Cotton Mills, are on a stay-in-strike demanding 48-hour-week and increase in rate-pay. Congress leader Saileswar Mitra prevented the workers of Weaving Department from joining the strikers. Owners threaten lock-out. Police is aiding them. But the strikers are firm.

Transport

Lucknow

1000 workers of the EIR Loco Workshop went on strike on October 17 due to suspension of a mechanic. The stay-in-strike in the machine shop began on October 17. Strike was called off after a week.

Ernakulam (Cochin State)

The stay-in-strike of the 1500 dock workers which began on October 5 ended on October 14. The executive engineer agreed to reinstate 45 discharged workers and assured not to retrench anyone in future.

Calcutta

5000 workers, including Anglo-Indian girls, of Tata Aircraft Co, went on strike on October 15. Demands---no retrenchment; wage increase, bonus.

Two Union leaders were arrested on October 16 by Military pickets posted at the factory. Mrinal Kanti Bose, President, AITUC has issued a statement in support of the strikers.

Conciliation talks broke down on October 18 for failure of owners to assure that there would be no retrenchment. On the 19th blacklegs brought by the Company walked over the bodies of picketers at the gate. Assistant Secretary of the Union, Haripada Mazumdar was seriously injured.

On October 21, workers won most of their demands and they resumed work on October 22.

Jute

Mymensingh

The workers of Mymensingh Jute Godown are on strike from October 7 demanding wage-increase. After 6 days the workers won on October 13. Leaders of the Communist Party, Muslim League, Forward Bloc and RSP supported them.

Chandarnagore

The Gondalpara Jute Mills employed a police officer in the Mill. The workers demanded his dismissal and came out on strike for a few hours—a token strike. The owners have declared lock-out from October 17.

Government have issued a leaflet supporting the stand of the owners.

Iron, Steel and Engineering

Burnpur

Bengal Government informed the Union that the management has accepted to put the dispute to arbitration by a High Court Judge. The Union has not replied and strike of 14,000 workers continues. The strike began on August 11.

Bombay

The workers of All India Glass Works (Madanpura) have been on strike from October 10. The owner has promised a bonus of 1/8th of the last year's earnings to all workers by 31st August. But no bonus had been given. Workers struck in the end.

Rajkot

Workers of Kamani Universal Engineering Works demanded bonus. The owners declared lock-out and the Majoor Mahajan acquiesced. The workers came to Ismail and he conducted their fight till the owner was forced to yield.

Calcutta

350 workers of Govind Sheet Metal Works are on strike since August 11 demanding increase in wages, DA, leave, bonus. Authorities are adamant, Government indifferent.

Workers of the Guest, Keene Factory are on strike from October 14 demanding reinstatement of the dismissed workers. Police sergeants chased the workers brandishing revolvers. Three Union leaders were arrested. Armed police is guarding the factory. 61 workers have been arrested till October 22.

Authorities are trying to start work with some of their chosen workers and refused to reemploy the old workers.

Beedi and Cigar Workers

A general strike of beedi and cigar workers of Malabar and South Karnatak commenced on October 21 for wage-increase, bonus, leave, recognition of the Union; scissors, etc., to be supplied by the management.

Tellicherry

1000 on strike. They held demonstrations. Two owners yielded on first day.

Cannanore

1200 workers of 4 big factories on strike. General public is sympathetic to strike.

Poonami

500 workers on strike.

Vallapatnam

Strike is complete in all 3 factories.

Mangalore

Strike is complete; 6 workers arrested for picketing.

Kanjangadu

101 workers on strike.

Owners of 3 factories in Chirakkal, 18 companies in Badgara and small owners at Kotacheri, Hosdurg, Kanjangadu agreed to concede the demands.

Trichur

In protest against the dismissal of 16 workers the workers of Ancheri Kakku's Beedi Co, have gone on strike.

In Cochin State the lowest wages are paid in this factory. Even small girls are employed at reduced wages.

Chandarnagore

Bidi workers are on strike from October 13 demanding wage-increase.

Clerks

Bombay

ICI—1250 Employees are on strike from October 16.

Forbes, Forbes Campbell and Co—200 employees are on strike from October 16.

W&T Avery—100 fitters are on strike from October 7 demanding wage-increase and bonus.

Goodlass Wall & Elephant Oil Mills—The salaried employees are on strike from October 14.

Miscellaneous

Calcutta

Brooke Bond Tea Co—The management dismissed two clerks and declared a lock-out from October 11. Later they agreed to reopen the factory on October 14 but refused to reinstate the dismissed clerks. This led to a strike by the workers on 14th October.

The Labour Commissioner declared the strike illegal and brutal repression was resorted to [to] break the strike. Over 30 workers were arrested till October 25. Policemen are guarding the company's office and buildings.

Lal Mia, League MLA; General Secretary of Bengal Provincial TUC; President, Port Trust Employee's Association have supported the strike; Students' Federation has sent volunteers to help in picketing.

UP Canal Workers

5000 canal workers of the UP Government struck on September 1. Their two month old strike continues. UP Government declared the strike illegal on October 12. Since then the strike is sought to be crushed by mass arrests of 355 workers and forcing other department employees to work as blacklegs.

Ernakulam

Workers of the loading section of the Burma Shell Co, are on a stay-in strike demanding an allowance for midday meal.

From October 21, all the 500 workers joined the strike.

Tata Oil Mill workers marched in a procession to the Burma Shell Co, to register their support to the strikers.

8. Police Open Fire on Communists in Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu

Report by F.W.A. Morris, District Magistrate, Coimbatore, to the Chief Secretary, Public Department, Government of Madras; Coimbatore, 11 November 1946. File No. 2701; Public (General) Department, Government of Madras (1946); Tamil Nadu State Archives.

Coimbatore,

11th November 1946.

Sir,

In continuation of my telegram despatched today, I regret to inform you that the Police were compelled to open fire this morning on a huge mob of Communist controlled Textile Workers outside the CS&W Mills, Coimbatore City.

There has been frequent trouble in this Mill since the beginning of the year—punctuated by strikes and lock-outs. The majority of the workers belonged to the Communist Labour

Union. In spite of frequent mediation by the Hon'ble Mr V.V. Giri, the Labour Commission, the Conciliation Officer and myself another lock-out was declared some weeks ago as the workers again created trouble. I tried to get the Communists to accept the mediation of Mr Subramanian, MLA, the representative for the Coimbatore City. But their demands were so extreme demanding in practice that only members of their Union be employed in the Mill and that certain dismissed workers be reinstated—that this attempt also failed. On 28th October Mr P. Ramamurthi, the Communist leader saw me and put forward a proposal which I regarded as affording a reasonable basis for discussion. But although he told me the local Communist leaders had, very reluctantly, agreed with the proposals, we found the next morning that they were still making the old, unacceptable demands.

On 29th October evening, at the request of the Hon'ble Minister for Labour, I saw him at the station and we discussed the question whether the Mill should reopen; though no settlement had been reached I told him I could give no guarantee as to the repercussions of this move but that as the Mill had to reopen some time we could try now. The Hon'ble Minister and myself also made it quite clear to the Mill Management that we could give no guarantees but merely try to maintain Law and Order.

On this understanding the Mill reopened 1st November 1946. The notice announcing the reopening, stated that 16 named workers would not be reemployed—these were the ring leaders of previous agitation. That afternoon some of the workers saw me to represent that this exclusion was unjust. I told them that the said workers had refused to answer the charges framed against them and that therefore the Management were justified in refusing to take them back. The workers were clearly dissatisfied with this reply.

On 7th November, Mr Krishnan, the Manager of the Mill saw me at Kangyam and proposed that loyal workers living in neighbouring villages should be transported to the Mill in lorries guarded by the Police. I refused to agree to this as it would not only acerbate feeling among other workers but would not even be effective if the lorries were attacked with stones, etc. But I suggested in a letter to the DSP that he might consider the feasibility of providing more police bandobast in and near these villages, which border on the City. He informed me today that he did so.

This morning at 9.15 a.m. while I was inspected [inspecting] the Office of the RDO, Coimbatore, the DSP arrived and informed me that he had heard from the Dy SP that Communists were preventing Congress workers from entering the Mill. I told him to verify the position himself and let me know whether the position was such as to require my presence. About ten minutes later a message was sent to me asking me to go to the Mill. I immediately went there, with the RDO, Coimbatore, arriving there at 9.30 a.m.

On arrival I was informed that the police had been compelled to fire on a riotous mob that were trying to prevent loyal workers from entering the Mill. Large crowds were collected at a distance from the Mill which we proceeded to clear away. They gave very little trouble and most of them appeared to be idle onlookers. We were then informed that there was trouble at the Somasundram Mills about a mile away. The Dy SP with RDO went off there with a police guard while the DSP and myself remained at the scene of the firing. In the meantime other police searched nearby houses and unearthed fugitives hiding therein. We were then informed that the Dy SP would like us to go to the Somasundram Mills. We went there and as we arrived the police party there let off some tear gas. Here again there were crowds in the various side streets. Most of them appeared to be idle spectators but one group were apparently Communist leaders. These latter, after the tear gas dissipated came out and started to abuse all of us, including the Ministry, the Management of the Mills, the Police and myself. After some time

they went away and I then heard the report of the Dy SP which is in substance contained in the telegram sent by the DSP, to the IG of Police and of which I enclose a copy.

I then went to the hospital where I saw some of the injured. As the medical officers were very busy attending to them I did not stay long but merely asked for a statement of casualties to be sent to me as soon as possible. I have reiterating [reiterated] this in writing since and shall submit the report to Govt. on receipt.

At 3.30 p.m. the DSP rang me up to say the situation was quiet but that there was a rumour the Communists planned to burn down the Mill tonight and also to attack the Manager's house. The Police are taking necessary action and I have approved a draft curfew order for the locality to be issued by the SDM, Coimbatore should the Police request it.

At 10 a.m. the Military Security Officer saw the DSP and myself outside the Mill and asked if we wanted any help. We said, not for the moment but there was no objection to troops standing by unostentatiously in case they were required. I later informed the Sub Area Commander that we anticipated there might be trouble this night and would be obliged if his column could stand by till tomorrow morning. He has kindly agreed to this.

I shall send another report tomorrow morning regarding what may happen tonight.

F.W.A. Morris.

11.11.46.

District Magistrate, Coimbatore.

9. Trouble Spreads in Coimbatore

Extracts from a report by F.W. Morris, District Magistrate, Coimbatore, to the Chief Secretary, Government of Madras; Coimbatore, 12 November 1946. File No. 2701; Public (General) Department, Government of Madras (1946); Tamil Nadu State Archives.

Position Upto 11 a.m. on 12th November 1946

Since despatching my first & second reports at 5 p.m. on 11th November the following are the developments in the situation:

Capt. Engineer, G3, Cbe Sub Area called and was given detailed information on the incident and the hospital casualty figures which were submitted to you in my second report. After consulting the DSP, and with my approval, the RDO issued a Curfew Order under Sec 144 CrPC covering the area affected in Coimbatore Town. A copy of that order is submitted.

The Managers of Brooke Bond India Factory and the Manager of the Kaleeswarar Mills informed me that they had declared lock-outs in their mills as their workers had rushed out at about 9 a.m. to join in the rioting. I approved of this step as a temporary expedient.

I received a telephone call from the SDM Pollachi informing me that the Communist workers in the Asher Textiles and Dhanalakshmi Mills in Tirupur had struck work and come out in procession as a protest against the Coimbatore Police firing. They did not take out a licence under sec 30 (2) of the Madras Police Act. But as only 2 HC's and 10 PC's were immediately available and it was not possible to despatch the Reserve to Tirupur from Coimbatore in time I advised the SDM not to take any action but merely watch proceedings, which went off peacefully. Action is now being taken against the leaders for not taking permission. None of the workers turned up for the night shift but the latest information is that the position in Tirupur is peaceful.

In Coimbatore there were no incidents during the night, thanks to the Curfew Order and police bandobast arrangements. Two of the dead were secretly buried to avoid demonstrations but four more have to be buried today and there may be trouble—one of the injured has since died in hospital, bringing the total number of dead up to six. Four males and one female are reported to be in a serious condition this morning.

There were 300 workers present when the gates of the CS&W Mills opened this morning and more are expected to turn up. The situation there is quiet. Action is contemplated under sec 107 CrPC against the Communist leaders as it may be difficult to obtain direct evidence of their presence yesterday morning. Of their complicity there can be no doubt. Eighteen people have so far been arrested, excluding the injured still in hospital.

The Military stood by in Sub Area HQ during the night and the Sub Area Commander has promised to supply platoons tonight in case there is trouble when the dead are cremated or should there be attempts at arson which are still alleged to find favour with the Communists....

Position Upto 4 p.m. on 12th November 1946

The position remain[s] quite.

Had another phone talk with Sub Area Commander and he informed me that the troops were still standing by in case there was trouble tonight. He also had available at three hours' notice a Mobile Column which could proceed to Tirupur should the position deteriorate there. My latest information from the RDO, Pollachi who is camping in Tirupur is that all the workers went back to work this morning.

Mr R. Venkatswamy, Hon. Secretary of the Millowners Association saw me. He stated that the general feeling in the town was that the position had considerably eased and that some "blood letting" was unfortunately necessary before the Communists could be brought to their senses. I had previously seen the Conciliation Officer and we had agreed that the Kaleswara, Somasundaram and Brooke Bonds Factories should not open tomorrow. We wished first to know how the night passed and how workers returned to work at CS & W Mills. The latter have now increased from 282 at 7 AM this morning to 319. As confidence returns we may expect a larger increase in strength. Mr Venkatswamy agreed with this course and we have fixed another meeting at 3 p.m. tomorrow to discuss the future of these three factories.

Mr Venkatswamy informed me that stones were thrown last night at the house of Dewan Bahadur C.S. Ratnasabapathy Mudaliar—who was away at the time. I have instructed the Police to see that the Police patrol of that area keeps an eye on this house in particular.

We are considering prosecuting the leaders in the three other factories. There can be no doubt that the affair was prearranged as at a signal given just before 9 a.m. in all these places all the workers rushed out to the scene of the trouble. It is also alleged that a large number of them were provided with sticks issued from the Communist Office opposite the Somasundaram Mills. It is reported that one of the dead was a leader from Brooke Bonds. I have asked the DSP to give me information regarding the six dead—whether Communist, Congress or ordinary workers or whether members of the general public. I shall submit the information to Govt. on receipt.

F.W.A. Morris.

12.11.46.

District Magistrate, Coimbatore.

10. Hindustan Mazdoor Sevak Sangh Approves Bombay Industrial Relations Bill

Extracts from the resolutions passed by Central Board, Hindustan Mazdoor Sevak Sangh; New Delhi, 17 November 1946. File No. 123; Jayaprakash Narayan Papers (1946); Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

2. The Board takes note of the Resolution of the Working Committee of the Indian National Congress, dated Wardha 13th August 1946, embodying Congress policy in relation to labour and requests every Branch and every Member of the Sangh to carry out to the fullest extent the policy and directions contained in the Resolution and report to the Sangh any violation of this on the part of Congressmen or of labour organisations with which Congressmen are connected.

The Board invites special attention of Members of the Sangh and Congressmen in general to the fact that Congress policy in the matter of industrial disputes favours recourse to arbitration in all cases in which other means for amicable settlement fail or are not available.

3. The Board approves of the Bombay Industrial Relation Bill as recently passed in the Bombay Legislative Council and requests members of the Sangh and Congressmen to give their full cooperation to the successful working of this legislation.

The Board is of opinion that the Bombay Industrial Relations Bill would serve as a suitable model of legislation in other provinces and advises Congress Ministries to undertake similar legislation.

4. The Board welcomes the resolution of the Congress Working Committee dated the 13th August 1946 with reference to Hindustan Mazdoor Savak Sangh and resolves that the Sangh should make adequate arrangements with a view to give effect to the intentions of the Working Committee in the matter.

11. Hindustan Mazdoor Sevak Sangh

Extracts from a report by Working Committee, Hindustan Mazdoor Sevak Sangh; New Delhi, 17 November 1946. File No. 123; Jayaprakash Narayan Papers (1946); Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

REPORT OF THE HINDUSTAN MAZDOOR SEVAK SANGH FROM MARCH 1945 TO OCTOBER 1946

The Constitution of the Hindustan Mazdoor Sevak Sangh was revised in March 1945 and the work of reorganisation was taken in hand immediately. The Central Board was enlarged in consultation with the head of the Congress Body functioning in each Province when Congress as such was under a Government ban.

The following persons were coopted as members of the Central Board:

- | | |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. Shri Gulzarilal Nanda. | 13. Shri V.V. Giri. |
| 2. Shri K.K. Desai. | 14. Shri N.G. Ranga. |
| 3. Shri S.C. Kher. | 15. Shri S.R. Subramanyan. |
| 4. Shri S.R. Vasavada. | 16. Shri V.R. Kallappa. |
| 5. Shri Moulana Abdul Bari. | 17. Shri P.Y. Deshpande. |
| 6. Shri Jagjivan Ram. | 18. Shri L.N. Patil. |
| 7. Dr Mrs Maitreyee Bose. | 19. Shri S.K. Patil. |

- | | |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 8. Shri Hare Krishna Mehtab. | 20. Shri Ashok Mehta. |
| 9. Shri Suraj Prasad Awasthi. | 21. Shri G.D. Ambedkar. |
| 10. Shri Pyarelal Agrawal. | 22. Shri R.S. Rukkerikar. |
| 11. Dr Gopichand Bhargava. | 23. Shri K.B. Dundur. |
| 12. Shri Haribhau Upadhya. | 24. Smt. Kamala Devi. |

Administrative Arrangements

... The headquarters of the Sangh had been established at Ahmedabad from the start. The central office of the Sangh was located in the premises of the Textile Labour Association, Ahmedabad, till October 1945 and in the Congress House, Ahmedabad, till July 1946. The office was shifted to Bombay in July 1946 and is at present housed in a spacious building in the heart of Bombay's labour area.

Finance

The Textile Labour Association, Ahmedabad, made collections from its members for assisting Trade Union work on the lines of the Hindustan Mazdoor Sevak Sangh. Out of this fund the Hindustan Mazdoor Sevak Sangh received Rs 11,000 in the course of a year. The aggregate donations received up-to-date are Rs 21,000 and this represents the total income of the Sangh for the period....

Trade Unions

Karnatak

... Recently in Hubli, the labourers of the local textile industry have been organised under the guidance of the Sangh.

Delhi

Shri G. Wapara of the Central office visited Delhi several times in connection with setting up a Branch for the Delhi Province and assisting in the organisation of Textiles Labour in Delhi. There is now a strong Trade Union working under the guidance of the Sangh. The Union has succeeded in securing substantial gains for the workers. The Union had to resort to a strike which ended when the Management agreed to arbitration. In another instance a dispute which resulted in strike was settled satisfactorily on the intervention of the Sangh.

In Delhi, Railway coolies and PWD staff have also been organised recently.

Bombay

... The Rashtriya Mill Mazdoor Sangh, working under the guidance of the Bombay Provincial Branch has now a membership of about 18,000 and there is every reason to hope that its membership will increase considerably in the near future.

The non-textile unions have a total membership of about 18,000 and are distributed among a number of unions in different fields....

12. Nagpur Textile Workers Strike

Extracts from an article, '22,000 Nagpur textiles workers strike'. *People's Age*, 17 November 1946.

Nagpur's textiles workers, 22,000 in all, are on a general strike since November 8. This is their reply to the earlier offensive of the Tatas who had locked out 9000 of the Empress Mill workers after the local Union had betrayed their strike only a fortnight back...

13. CP and Berar Miners Declare General Strike

Copy of wireless message from District Superintendent of Police, Chhindwara, to Inspector General of Police, Nagpur; 17 November 1946. File No. 3-A/1947; Political and Military Department, Government of Central Provinces & Berar (1946); Madhya Pradesh State Archives.

Reference your message of 16th regarding situation in mining areas. Workers union declared a general strike on 12th. To meet situation CI [Chief Inspector] Chhindwara, 4 Platoon Commanders, 6 Head Constables, 40 Constables in three police buses with SDM beside the police station staff of Parasias Jamai and Ghorawadi were on duty. DSP was also on job in the area. At about midday on 12th a mob of mineworkers [of] about 800 attempted to stop Barkuhi Power House and were prevented by police on duty. They committed two mischievous acts by unloading coal tubs and damaging poles of Chandmeta mines. SDM and CI visited most of the mines and except negligible incident bound to take place on such occasions not being serious reported workers resumed work on the 13th morning and everything was peaceful on 13th. Pench Valley Engineer requested withdraw police as condition peaceful but full force kept to meet any eventuality till 13th evening when half the force returned [to] Chhindwara. Conditions absolutely normal on 14th and hence extra force withdrawn 14th evening. Enquiries on receipt of your message disclosed that Newton Chikhli Mine Manager reported on the 15th [to the Coal] Committee that two of his boilers were extinguished by strikers during stay of fifteen minutes but fire was immediately put up by local workers. No report of this incident made to police and even to Mr Limaye, SDM, and CI Mishra who visited Newton Chikhli mines on 13th and met Manager who said all was well except few abuses by the strikers. Had the incident as reported now took place on 12th the non-reporting till 15th to any one impossible. Newton Chikhli now asserted rise of water negligible. Since 13th situation peaceful. All precautions were taken. CI Chhindwara remained on spot till 14th and again is there since 15th. Any further trouble can be easily dealt with. Mine owners apprehended general strike for 'ong duration. Possibly the telegram of 15th by Coal Committee due to their desire to impress authorities gravity of the situation. Haldulkar Workers Union has again served a notice on Manager. Other mines to reinstate mineworkers dismissed for disobeyed fact [?] on 12th and failing drastic action [?]. Haldulkar is the chief labour agitator and desirability of action against him under recently enacted Maintenance of Public Order. Act being discussed with DM, and Manager Shaw Wallace discussing mines question tomorrow. Further details will follow.

14. Action Against Coal Miners of Pench and Kanhan Valleys (CP and Berar)

Report by District Superintendent of Police, Chhindwara, to Inspector General of Police, Nagpur; 18 November 1946. File No. 3-A/1947; Political and Military Department, Government of Central Provinces & Berar (1946); Madhya Pradesh State Archives.

Situation in Mines Area

Since some time the mines workers of Pench Valley mines area have been agitating for the increase in pay, pensions and various other demands for the betterment of their lot. They

claim that the mines owners have made huge profits during the boom years of war and their union headed by R.K. Hardulkar asserts that this has been achieved by the blood and toil of the labourers. There is a CP Mine Workers Union in which a large number of labourers are members. The strength of membership is 5000 and wields considerable influence amongst the labourers. Mr R.K. Hardulkar is the General Secretary of the Union. After the assumption of office by the Congress, the Mahakoshal Congress Committee decided to pay their attention [sic] and rescue the workers from the influence of Communist[s] and Forward Blockist[s]. Mr Pathak, organiser, Mahakoshal Congress Mazdoor Samiti was deputed to work among the CP mine workers with H Qrs at Jamai, but unfortunately he failed to succeed and did not create any enthusiasm amongst the workers for Congress Samiti. Mr R.S. Ruiker is the President of the CP Mine Workers Union and stays at Nagpur and the activities of this union are more or less guided and run by Mr R.K. Hardulkar Secretary, Mine Workers Union, Chhindwara. On 21-10-46 Mr R.K. Hardulkar put up a demand embodied into "Demands of the Mine Workers", in which 27 demands were put in. A copy of the demands is enclosed herewith. Mr R.K. Hardulkar at the same time served a notice on the Secretary, Coal Committee, Hardegarh Mines, P.S. Jamai to the effect that if the 27 demands of the Pench and Kanhan coalfield workers of Chhindwara district are not fulfilled by the 11th Novr 1946 a general strike will be observed on the 12th Novr. Leaflets in Hindi exhorting the mine workers under the signature of Mr R.K. Hardulkar were distributed on a wide scale and Mr R.K. Hardulkar sent two of his trusted workers from Chandameta mines to Nagpur to get Communist agitators from Nagpur so that the workers may be roused to observe a complete strike. Definite instructions were issued by the Union that complete stoppage of work should be enforced in pumping, engineering, electricity and all the branches essential for the keeping up of the mines and running them. A copy of the leaflet is enclosed. When this leaflet was in circulation and reports were received from SOs I visited the mines area on the 9th and met several managers and owners and discussed matters with them. Most of the owners and proprietors were of opinion that the general strike will not materialise and if at all any strike is done [sic] it would be negligible. I was not satisfied with this attitude of the owners as secret information available shows that the union is bent upon stopping all work and the workers were bent upon mischief. The matter was further discussed with Messrs Leigh and Atkinson and with Mr Farquhar the then DM. It was found that if [the] working [of the] powerhouse or pumping station is stopped for 24 hours as was contemplated by the union the water level will rise considerably and mines will be flooded with the result that the routine and daily output of coal will be considerably lowered and consequently a large number of workers will be thrown out of employment as they will not be able to work in the flooded mines. The recent rains had considerably raised the water level in the Pench and Kanhan rivers and generally in the coal valley. This question was fully discussed besides the owners with Mr V.R. Chopda, Inspector of Mines, stationed at Chhindwara by Govt of India. He showed great anxiety if the mines were flooded. I tried to contact Mr R.K. Hardulkar to advise and prevent him from bringing out workers from essential pumping and powerhouse stations. He was reported to be ill. Mr Chopda and myself decided that Mr Chopda should go to the house of Mr Hardulkar and explain him the consequences of his unwise action in calling out the men from essential pumping and powerhouse duties and explained him the technical side of the mines. Mr V.R. Chopda went to the house of Mr Hardulkar and convinced him of the inadvisability of getting the mines flooded by his advise [sic] and actions. After some discussion with Mr Hardulkar [he] agreed that he was not

aware that such a serious consequence will follow if mines are flooded and assured Mr Chopda that he will instruct his workers not to bring out power and pumping station staff.

As a precautionary measure the DM was requested to depute the SDM [to] the police. CI Police Chhindwara, 4 Pl. Commds., 6 HC's and 40 constables in three police buses were sent on the evening of the 11th Novr 1946 who took up positions to guard important and essential powerhouses. The three Nagpur Communists, Messrs Gosain, Sunderam and Deshpande had established their H Qrs at Chandameta close to Barkuhi main powerhouse of Shaw Wallace and Co and it was anticipated that their main attack [attack] if any will be the property and powerhouses of Shaw Wallace who run about 60 per cent of mines in the coal valley. I also visited the mines area and was on the move in the area in spite [of] having fever with which I [am] laid up still. At about midday after the observance of the strike on the 12th Novr. 1946 a defined mob attempted to rush and overpower the loyal workers of the Barkuhi main powerhouse. The police on duty stopped their nefarious designs. In this connection I would request you to see kindly my No. 210-A dated 14-11-46 addressed to DIG, CID. On receipt of your wireless that the Manager, Newton Chikhali complained to the Coal Committee on the 15th that two of their boilers were put out of fire for 15 minutes which resulted in the stoppage of work for 2 hours with the result that water level rose in the mines. On the 9th Novr. 46 SO Parasia was definitely instructed to visit the mines and tell them of my intention to post police in the Newton Chikhali mines. The Management and the owner informed SO Parasia that they do not need any police and that their workers are not going on strike and if any further trouble is apprehended they will let the DSP know by the evening of the 11th Novr. 1946. No such request for police help was received. Mr S.N. Limaye SDM Chhindwara and CI Police visited the mines and met Manager Newton Chikhali who assured them that things were peaceful and nothing [had] happened in his mines except few abuses by the strikers. Minute enquiries made by the police since then show that the workers of the mines who went on strike emptied few shovel-ful of fire [sic] from two boilers during their stay of 15 minutes in the engine room and only two of them had entered the room. The loyal workers immediately put fresh coal and boilers were again up to their strength within 15 minutes though the management now tries to make out that the pumping was stopped for 2 hours and have assured us now that even if pumps were stopped for four days no serious damage to the pumps would have been caused. The seriousness of the damage in Newton Chikhali as attempted to be made out by the mines is doubted, on account of their non-reporting later as mentioned above.

The labourers have resumed work on the morning of 13th and have been peaceful since then. The Ojha Mines manager has dismissed nine key-workers of his mine as they went on strike on the 12th November against the wishes and desires and caused loss. Mr Hardulkar has now served a notice on Ojha Mines that unless the dismissed workers are reinstated drastic steps will be taken. Mr Leigh, Manager, Shaw Wallace, discussed at length the situation in the mines area just now. The present position is that mines are working peacefully and quietly but the mine owners apprehended a prolonged and complete strike in near future when they apprehend that workers under the influence of Mr Hardulkar and his Communist friends and helpers will seriously damage pump plants and powerhouses and paralyse the whole system of their services and force them to agree to the 27 demands. The result of this will be that the coal [mine owners?] will have to raise their prices. The mine owners are of opinion with which I agree that some drastic action is needed to control and put a stop to these constant and frequent strikes and threats. The recent Maintenance of Public Order Act has none too soon been passed. It is timely and its application will surely save this important coal industry from ruins.

I am of opinion that action in the first instance [should be taken?] against Mr Hardulkar who pretends to be a Forward Blockist but in reality is a Communist who gets the help of Communists and members of Hindustan Red Army. The Hindustan Red Army is well known to me and has been always against the Congress and all non-violent institutions. They are trying to foment by their actions serious troubles in the mining area and the DM has been addressed to take action and move Government against R.K. Hardulkar. It is possible it may result in a strike for a day but will have a sobering effect on others. A list of known agitators who are not of much status has been prepared and if things do not improve about half a dozen of them will be deported from the mines area and their [re]entry banned. All these drastic steps will only be resorted to, to meet the situation if and when it arises. The new DM is expected this evening and further reports will follow after necessary discussion. In the meantime a careful watch is being maintained over the mines area to meet any development.

15. Resolutions of Hindustan Mazdoor Sevak Sangh

Extracts from resolutions passed by Central Board, Hindustan Mazdoor Sevak Sangh; New Delhi, 20 November 1946. File No. 123; Jayaprakash Narayan Papers (1946); Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

*New Delhi,
20th November 1946.*

In pursuance of the Resolution of the Working Committee of the Indian National Congress, dated Wardha 13th August, 1946, with regard to the Hindustan Mazdoor Sevak Sangh ... the Central Board of the Sangh considered the matter at this meeting and passed the following Resolutions:

1. The Board welcomes the resolutions of the Congress Working Committee dated 13th August 1946 with reference to the Hindustan Mazdoor Sevak Sangh and resolved that the Sangh should make adequate arrangements with a view to giving effects to the intentions of the Working Committee in the matter.

The Board believes further that the aforesaid resolution of the Working Committee creates the following obligations:

(i) Any activity undertaken by Congress organisations for the benefit of the working class, in the interest of economy, efficiency and uniformity of policy and direction be entrusted to the appropriate branches of the Sangh and Congress organisation concerned will give its full support and cooperation to the Sangh in the conduct of these activities.

(ii) Any intervention of Congressmen in labour questions will be on the basis of the policy and decisions of the Sangh and as far as possible after consultation with the Sangh.

(iii) The Sangh will continue to offer full scope for activity within the organisation to persons belonging to all groups in the Congress who conform to the policy of the Sangh....

(iv) The Sangh will make reports to the Congress from time to time.

(The word "Congress Organisations" includes Praja Mandals or other organisations affiliated to the All India State Peoples Conference.)

2. Resolved that the following be coopted as Members of the Central Board:

- (i) Sjt Jai Prakash Narain
- (ii) " Hariharnath Shastri
- (iii) " V.V. David....

In our opinion these resolutions would suffice for the purpose of implementing the Resolution of the Working Committee dated 13th August 1946 bearing on the question.

Vallabhbhai Patel.
Gulzarilal Nanda.

16. *Amrita Bazar Patrika* Workers' Strike

Statement by Surinder Mohan Ghosh, President, Bengal Provincial Congress Committee; 20 November 1946. File No. 158; Jayaprakash Narayan Papers (1946); Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

Towards the end of September information came to me that some dispute was developing between the management of the *Amrita Bazar Patrika* and its workers. I was confident that the matter would be settled amicably. But on my return from Noakhali I am surprised to hear that a strike has been going on for some days in the A.B. Patrika office. I have also heard that some ugly incidents occurred which if true, will not add to the credit of the management.

Newspapers generally should not be looked upon as purely commercial ventures. Both the management and the workers should consider these as organs of social service. A.B. Patrika bearing the memory of Sisir Kumar and Motilal occupies an affectionate nook in the heart of the Bengalee public. So it is all the more regrettable that a labour strike should be going on in the Patrika office resulting in the suspension of its publication at this national crisis.

I have occasion also to know something about grievances of the workers. They do not appear to be frivolous or unreasonable. Rather many of them deserve careful consideration and call for immediate redress. So I hope and expect that both the parties would see their way to meet together and settle the dispute. At this stage I reserve further comment.

Surendra Mohan Ghosh.
20.11.46.

[Attached with the above statement is the following pamphlet, selected extracts from which are presented below.]

A General Report on the *Amrita Bazar Patrika* Strike Situation

By Miss Bina Das, MLA

Since the formation of the *Amrita Bazar Patrika* Press Workers' Union the workers and employees of the Patrika had been considering the necessity of presenting their many long-standing grievances of the authorities but taking into consideration the absence of S. J. Tushar Kanti Ghosh, Director-in-Charge of the Company from India they decided to wait till he came back. On his return to India a letter dated September 16, 1946, along with a list of demands was sent to him at Allahabad.... No reply came within the promised time but the Union decided to wait. However on October 18, 1946, we received a long letter from S. J. Ghosh which practically did not touch any of the Union's demands excepting the case of Mr Patal Ghosh. In the meantime the *Amrita Bazar Patrika* Office Employees Union was formed. A joint meeting of the two Unions on October 20, 1946 discussed the letter of S. J. Ghosh as also a report of our discussion with him on October 2, and resolved to authorise the President of the

two Unions to serve strike notice as the attitude of the authorities was considered to be most unsympathetic.... The authorities having failed to avail of the opportunity the strike started in the midnight of November 10, 1946, and the Paper did not come out on November 11, 1946. On the second day of the strike the Company imported during curfew hours some blacklegs from Jotin Hui's Printing & Industrial Machineries Limited using a van marked with Red Cross and bearing the sign of RWAC. On November 15, there was a series of violent attacks on strikers at different places. Early in the morning peaceful picketers were assaulted with fists and lathies in front of the main gate of Patrika House including myself.... On the same day at about 11-30 a.m. a murderous assault was made on Mr Purna Singha in a lane near Shyam Square Park, when he was returning home alone, by six Hindustanis armed with lathies, iron rods and a gupti [sword sheathed in a walking stick]....

... It is evident that we were all along trying our best to come to a settlement with the authorities from the very beginning and it is the adamant attitude of the Company that is responsible for the continuance of the strike.

Bina Das.

President,

Amrita Bazar Patrika Press Workers Union,
& Amrita Bazar Patrika Office Employees Union.

17. Police Fire on Coimbatore Strikers

Extracts from an article, 'The battle of Coimbatore'. *People's Age*, 24 November 1946.

On November 11, the Madras police fired on striking workers at Coimbatore. They did not fire once or twice, but they kept up their brutality in a steady stream of bullets. They followed retreating crowds of workers, firing all the time.

The total number of killed is not yet known, but it is in no case less than Twelve.

But November 11 saw at Coimbatore not only police butchery of the ghastiest type, it saw equally unprecedented heroism on the part of the working-class. The story of the courage and the glory of Coimbatore's men and women workers will remain for ever an inspiration for our national movement.

Amalner, August 27; Golden Rock, September 5; Kolar, November 4; Coimbatore, November 11....

18. Indian Journalists' Association Supports

Amrita Bazar Patrika Strikers

Copy of resolution passed at a general meeting of Indian Journalists' Association; [where?], 27 November 1946. File No. 158; Jayaprakash Narayan Papers (1946); Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

"This extraordinary general body meeting of the members of the Indian Journalists' Association including the members of the Executive Committee places on record its fullest sympathy with the employees of the Amrita Bazar Patrika who have been on strike for the last 16 days and considers that their grievances demand careful and sympathetic consideration. This meeting deplores the arrest of some of the strikers and failure of the authorities to arrive at a settlement

with the employees which goes against the interests of such a nationally renowned newspaper as the *Amrita Bazar Patrika*.

"This meeting earnestly requests Mr Tushar Kanti Ghosh, the Editor and the Managing Director of the A.B. Patrika to come to Calcutta without any further delay with a view to settling the strike and the unhappy situation arising therefrom.

"That this meeting is firmly of the opinion that the impasse created can only be settled by mutually agreed arbitration.

"That as token of sympathy with these striking employees of the Patrika who are members of the IJA, a sum of Rs 250 be paid out to Mr K.P. Biswas of the Amrita Bazar Patrika Press Workers' Union for their relief.

"This meeting deplores that some of the daily newspapers and Press Agencies have not given proper publicity to 'the' strike and requests them to give it in future."

3.A.xii December

1. Victimisation of Jalgaon Girni Kamgar Union Leaders

Resolution adopted by Working Council, Bombay Trade Union Congress; Bombay 24 December 1946. File No. 72; All India Trade Union Congress Papers (1946); Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

REPRESSION IN JALGAON

(1) Government Repression

The Working Council of the BPTUC strongly protests against the action of the Government of Bombay in externing four prominent members of the Jalgaon Girni Kamgar Union including, the President and General Secretary, for a period of two years from the province of Bombay under the "Goonda" Act. This action on the part of the Government in treating trade unionists as "Goondas" is an abuse of the District Police Act and curtailment of civil liberties. It is important to note, in this connection, that the behaviour of the textile workers in Jalgaon has been peaceful throughout.

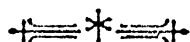
The Working Council also condemns the use of the Criminal Law Amendment Act against those who were conducting peaceful picketing at the gate of the textile mill. Further, the Working Council condemns the use of the Press Emergency Powers Act against the Secretary of the Union for publishing a handbill about Amalner Firing.

(2) Attitude of the Management

The Working Council strongly condemns the attitude of the Management of the textile mills at Jalgaon in victimising 19 workers for their legitimate trade union activities.

(3) Appeal to Government

The Working Council urges upon the Government of Bombay that the repressive measures adopted in Jalgaon should be withdrawn forthwith and that they should bring pressure on the Management to reinstate the victimised workers.



2. Military Accounts Union Complains of Victimisation

Extracts from a letter by the Secretary, Military Accounts Union, Kanpur, to Jayaprakash Narayan; Kanpur, 28 December 1946. File No. 162; Jayaprakash Narayan Papers (1946); Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

Cawnpore,
28.12.46.

Dear Sir,

... I hope you are aware of our strike in August '46 which was called off on the advise [advice] of Pt. Nehru as soon as the Congress entered the Interim Government.

Sjt. Mohan Lal Gautam had a talk with Mr Trilok Singh (ICS), Personal Secretary of Pt. Nehru, on our behalf and he was assured that no discrimination will be made between the strikers and non-strikers in words or deeds. But after more than three months we find 9 clerks have been dismissed at Jubbulpore recently because they took active part in the strike.

Further in a meeting of the Mily. Accts. Union at Lahore convened on the request of the CMA (Pension), the secretary of the Union was insulted by the CMA against which the clerks protested and made demonstration. The CMA took revenge in his official capacity by serving the most active members of the Union with dismissal charge sheets.

Moreover, the pay for the strike period has not yet been adjusted and it is not known when the payment will be made.

These things are increasing dissatisfaction among the clerks which may lead to catastrophies that nobody desires. So, we want that the clerks may be satisfied in the above matters to avoid any unrest in the near future.

We shall be highly obliged if you kindly advise us what is desirable for us to do in such circumstances and in which way you can render some help to us, because we are sure that your help will lead us to success.

Jai Hind.

A.R. Bhattacharya.
Secretary,
Military Accounts Union, Cawnpore.

3. Vallabhbhai Patel on Industrial Strikes

Extracts from a news report, 'Internal strife bars freedom'. *Hindustan Times*, 31 December 1946.

... Referring to industrial strikes in the country during the past one year. Sardar Patel said both the industrialists and the workers had suffered thereby. There was shortage of food and cloth in the country and the strikes had accentuated this shortage.

Appealing to the workers to settle their disputes' with the employers by peaceful means, he pointed out that both in the provinces and at the Centre popular representatives were in charge of labour affair. There would no longer be any need, therefore, to resort to strikes for settling disputes.

Industry in India was yet in its infancy and the workers would not get much by getting embroiled in disputes. Both in 1942 and during the past year, the workers in Ahmedabad had displayed their sound political training by avoiding violence. They might not have gained as

much as they ought to, but they had certainly gained more than those who had followed the path of strikes and violence.—API.

4. Inter Union Rivalry in Madurai, Tamil Nadu

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Madras Province for the second half of December 1946. Public (General) Department, Government of Madras (1946); Tamil Nadu State Archives.

... The bitter antagonism between the Textile Workers Union (Communist controlled) and the Madura Labour Union of the Madura Mills, Madura showed itself in serious lawlessness on 17th December, 1946. A local train was stoned and there was several serious clashes between the members of the two Unions both inside and outside the Mill premises resulting in stabbing, arson and looting on a small-scale.

3.A.xiii Miscellaneous

[Many undated documents are kept on file in the various collections at the archives. Such documents as have been selected by us have a relevance to our volume, and would otherwise have been included with the rest of the papers presented above, had they been dated. Wherever possible dates have been estimated.

The very last document in this section is from the year 1947, but selected extracts appertain to 1946.]

1. Giridih Colliers' Strike and May Day Celebrations

Handwritten draft copy of a press communique by the Communist Party of India, Giridih; undated, May 1946. File No. 55; All India Trade Union Congress Papers (1946); Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

MAY DAY

12,000 workers of the Giridih Collieries of the State Railways Coal Department going on complete strike for a day, about 3000 mica workers of different factories abstaining from their duties on that day, a mammoth meeting of 15,000 workers in the morning and the entire meeting forming itself into a huge procession and going round the town of Giridih with festoons, hundreds of Red Flags and posters—were the features of the first postwar May Day celebration in Giridih. Incidentally this was the biggest mass mobilisation Giridih had ever known or seen and the political significance can be gauged by the fact that the entire colliery ceased working—the result of all workers responding to the call of the Red Flag for a general strike on May Day.

The meeting of 15,000 strong was presided by Comrade Tallo Chaudhury—worker, Communist president of the Coal Workers' Union. Speeches were made by Comrades Chapal Bhattacharya and Barin Dey—the former, speaking on behalf of the Communist Party explained the Party's line in the background of the present political set up today that obtains now after the Cabinet Mission's arrival in India. He demanded the immediate withdrawal of the British troops from India and the transference of all power to an Interim Government and declared that whatever political differences, we Indians have at present—will be settled among ourselves—and for that the Interim Govt will have to invoke a Constituent Assembly on the

basis of adult franchise; the latter comrade Barin Dey after explaining the significance of May Day—declared that the last 60 years of militant Trade Union movement had not only given the world working class the organised strength to fight the capitalist oppression and exploitation by winning big concessions from them—it had been able to establish that Workers' and Peasants' raj in the Soviet Union and making of people's democracies in about half a dozen countries of Europe—when the deadweight of Capitalist Imperialist dominance has gone forever. In India too we see the working-class more organised and roused against Capitalist exploitation and Imperialist slavery, and that is why we find the working class of Giridih responding to the call of the Red Flag by going on a complete one day strike to celebrate the first postwar May Day. In conclusion he urged upon the workers to make this huge mobilisation a starting point for the final battle for realisation of the genuine demands of the coal and mica workers for a better life in a new society.

After the meeting the entire crowd formed itself into a huge procession and paraded the principal streets of the town.

Altogether new enthusiasm was witnessed. The day shift workers who left their jobs to a man, in spite of threats of assaults and lock-outs. The Head gangmen of a particular pit offered Re 1 each to each miner if he reported for duty—but the miners almost to a man kicked the offer.

Resolutions demanding the withdrawal of British troops in India, of immediate acceptance of minimum TU demands and immediate enquiry into the widespread malpractices and corruption in State Railway Collieries of Giridih and Bokara, running into millions of rupees were passed in the meeting.

Recent ration cuts in the coalfields which have reduced the minimum intake of calories [calories] from 2200 to 1600 have already been resisted by coal miners of Jharia and Raniganj coalfields in isolated actions. The May Day strike in Giridih Railway Collieries shows with complete clearness the readiness of the coal miners to move into action against conditions of semi-serfdom which have been the outcome of years of colonial slavery.

2. All India Trade Union Congress and the Freedom Struggle

Extracts from copy of a letter by Manek Gandhi, Assistant Secretary, All India Trade Union Congress, Bombay to Harry Smith, 7 Crescent Road, Rowley Park, Stafford, UK. The copy of the letter is undated, but likely May/June 1946. File No. 35; All India Trade Union Congress Papers (1946); Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

*Bombay,
Undated.*

Dear Mr Smith,

... I thank you for the very kind interest that you have taken in our Trade Union movement and in the political aspirations of the people of my country. You must have read the proposals of the Cabinet Mission regarding the Indian political question. Both the Congress and the League are dissatisfied with certain portions of it. We in the Trade Union field feel that it is not a step towards national freedom and that the scheme is likely to further the disruption in the Indian political movement. The scheme gives independence to the Princes. Sovereignty in the real sense of the term has been granted to them but no sovereignty or even a semblance of it is in the scheme for the people of the Indian States. With the representatives of the Princes in the Constituent Assembly and with no adult franchise in British India you can see what this

Constituent Assembly can achieve for the toiling masses. We feel that if the Cabinet Mission was really serious then it should have fixed a date for the withdrawal of the British troops and not left it to a treaty to be signed after the Constitution is framed. We also feel that India should have been declared independent and also the elections to the Constituent Assembly should have been fixed on the basis of adult franchise both for British India and Indian India.

Conditions in India are worsening. There have been big movements amongst the people of the Indian States particularly in Kashmir and in Punjab. Unprecedented repression has been let loose in Kashmir and a Jellianwalla Baug where hundreds were massacred [has] been renacted. The Indian railwaymen are forced [to] strike which will begin from 27th June if their demands regarding for them by the Government of India. At present negotiations are taking place between the All India Railwaymen's Federation and the Railway Board. The Bombay textile industry is also witnessing a period of spontaneous strikes. All over India working-class is marching ahead to secure some sort of wage increase and is facing all sort of repression....

Yours sincerely,
MG
Assistant Secretary.

3. All India Trade Union Congress Refutes Vallabhbhai Patel's Remarks

Undated statement by Mrinal Kanti Bose, President, All India Trade Union Congress. File No. 9; All India Trade Union Congress Papers (1946); Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

Sardar Patel's Views on AITUC

Certain observations made by Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel to a deputation of Calcutta students disparaging the All India Trade Union Congress, are likely to create confusion in the minds of people as to the aims and objects of the AITUC express no opinion on his criticisms of the AITUC. He is entitled to his opinion as any of us. But I regret that he should have allowed himself to hit the AITUC below the belt. He suggests, for instance, that labour "might be exploited by the leaders of the Trade Union Congress." The word 'exploitation' has been exploited for many purposes and by many people. The employers use the same language with reference to Trade Union leaders when they refuse to improve the service conditions of their workers, which Sardarji knows as any of us, are, generally speaking miserable.

The National Congress policy in regard to mill owners has thus been expressed by Sardarji: "In our present course of action it is but strategic and scientific to take with ourselves the mill owners also who find slavery degrading." I do not know much of strategy or science but I know that there are mill owners, Congress-minded and otherwise patriotic, who do not think much of keeping their workers in a state which, for the low wages, long hours of work, absence of rules of service relating to holidays, leave, maternity benefit, etc., may appropriately be described as "degrading slavery". During the presence of Sardarji and other eminent Congress leaders in Calcutta representations were made to them by union leaders asking them to enquire into the conditions of services of the workers of a certain big mill, the managing agents of which are well-known for their liberal financial support to the Congress. A strike involving nine thousand workers has been going on in that mill for about a month. Neither Sardarji nor any of the Congress leaders found time to look into the matter.

They might have good reasons for their inaction, but all that I want to say is this: The mill owners may very well be “exploiting” their association with the Congress without the knowledge of the Congress leaders. I do not say that there may not be “leaders” in the Trade Union Congress out to exploit the workers for “political purposes”. There may be persons within the fold of the Congress itself or associated with the Congress who may be exploiting that great institution for something worse, namely, personal ends. Sardarji therefore should have been well advised not to throw stones at the AITUC.

In Sardarji’s view “the solution of the labour problems should be effected through agreed arbitration” and he deprecates that “political purposes” should be brought in the struggle of the working-class. The AITUC does not accept that view. Its constitution says that “although collective bargaining is the necessary implication of a Trade Union and although in the transitional period to socialism, negotiations, representations, joint action and other methods of collective bargaining must remain an integral part of Trade Union activities, labour and capital cannot be reconciled within the capitalistic system.” Sardarji would maintain the capitalistic system. He expects labour leadership to be confined to finding a solution of the labour problems through “agreed arbitration”. Any other activity according to him, is exploitation of workers for “political purposes”.

The fact is that the AITUC has a political purpose which is “to establish a socialist state in India”. It does not believe that the workers can have a fair deal within the framework of capitalism. Even in England and the USA workers have not found a solution in the method recommended by Sardarji for Indian workers. It is, therefore, open to the AITUC and its leadership to take “political” action though Sardarji may not like it. The capitalist class also does not like it. May I not expect that Sardarji who is a great friend of labour, may not by attributing the desire of political exploitation to TUC leaders lend moral support to the capitalistic class who, Heaven knows, even without such support is powerful enough to keep labour under “degrading conditions of slavery”, to quote Sardarji’s words in another connection. Sardarji’s statement can have only a disruptive effect on the AITUC that has during the last twenty-five years built up the Labour movement as it is in India today.

4. Bombay Provincial TUC Blames Police for Amalner Firing

An undated and unsigned office note prepared from an enquiry report conducted by Dinkar Desai, General Secretary, Bombay Provincial Trade Union Congress. File No. 72; All India Trade Union Congress Papers (1946); Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

Police Firing on Amalner Workers: Enquiry Report by Dinkar Desai

“Firing is a very serious matter. It should be resorted to only in very exceptional circumstances and that too after exhausting all other methods of dispersing the crowd such as giving a serious warning to disperse and making a lathi charge. Again, one may admit the necessity of resorting to firing if the Police force is completely overpowered. The facts of the situation in Amalner show that the Police force was not overpowered. They were not even surrounded by the people on all sides. There was no lathi charge by the Police before firing was resorted to. I, therefore, think that firing was unjustified.” Thus concludes Mr Dinkar Desai, General Secretary of the Bombay Provincial TUC, in his detailed report submitted to the BPTUC on the

circumstances and events that culminated in the Police firing on the textile workers at Amalner (East Khandesh) on 27th August last.

Mr Desai, in accordance with a resolution passed by the BPTUC, visited Amalner personally and conducted a thorough enquiry into the whole matter by visiting the scene of firing and examining independent witnesses who are neither Congressmen nor Communists.

With regard to the extent of the firing, the Report says that "the nature and extent of injuries caused to the people fired upon was extremely grave resulting in the death of nine persons and maiming for life about ten persons. Considering the fact that firing was resorted to at a close range, as admitted by the Home Minister in the Legislative Assembly, and on unarmed people, I am of the opinion that the firing was out of all proportions."

The Report blames the District Superintendent of Police for his "unwise and tactless" behaviour in handling the situation. For instance, Mr Desai is of the view that firing could have been avoided if the DSP [had] not arrested the Union leaders on the spot and had waited till the evening. He also shows by documentary evidence that the attitude of the DSP towards the Amalner Girni Kamgar Union, from the very beginning, was not just and proper.

Dealing with the question of the promulgation of the prohibitory order under Section 144 of the CProCode in Amalner town, Mr Desai, after examining the question in great detail, concludes that "the prohibitory order, besides being contrary to the declared policy of the Government, was totally unjustified and uncalled for and was a wanton attack on the civil liberties of the workers."

Mr Desai, however, thinks that, though the prohibitory order was unjustified, it should not have been broken by the Union leaders particularly because they could have held and actually did hold mass meetings just outside the town limits.

Another important point made in the Report is with regard to the failure of the Government of Bombay to intervene in time in the dispute between the workers and the management, which ultimately culminated into the firing. This failure Mr Desai says, "is particularly objectionable in view of the fact that the dispute had dragged on for a very long time and that the Union had repeatedly and pressingly requested for Government intervention, showing their readiness for an amicable settlement. If Government had intervened in time, the tragedy of August 27 could have been avoided. It is deplorable that the telegram sent by the Commissioner of Labour to the Union asking whether they were prepared for arbitration was despatched from Bombay about three hours after the firing had taken place. It is possible that this telegram, despatched from Bombay at 8.25 p.m., was sent after the news of the firing had already reached Governmental authorities."

5. M.K. Bose: Communal Riots and the Duty of Workers

Statement by Mrinal Kanti Bose, President, All India Trade Union Congress; undated copy, but possibly November 1946. File No. 72; All India Trade Union Congress Papers (1946); Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

A meeting of the General Council of the AITUC will be held at Delhi on the 29th and 30th November and 1st December. Among other subjects the position of workers in relation to the present communal disturbances will be taken into consideration. I am asking labour unions affiliated to the AITUC to resume their normal activities where these have been suspended. Where mass meetings cannot be held the unions should hold their executive council meetings so that their representatives may be in a position to held the General Council to decide upon

a proper line of action having regard to the hardship to which workers have been subjected owing to the riots and the unfair advantage that the employers in many places have been taking of the situation. Measures have to be devised to rehabilitate the workers and peasants who have suffered. The workers should create conditions in which civil liberties can be restored.

6. M.K. Bose Urges an Enquiry into Amalner Firing

Statement by M.K. Bose, President, All India Trade Union Congress; undated copy, but possibly end of September 1946. File No. 11; All India Trade Union Congress Papers (1946); Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

In my statement on the Police Firing at Amalner which appeared in the Press on the 14th September last, I drew the attention of the public to the report that a peaceful procession of textile workers was fired upon by the Police with the result that nine persons died including the Vice President and the Secretary of the union. About sixty persons were reported to have been more or less seriously injured. I expressed my astonishment that an event like this should have happened under the administration of a Congress Government. In reply to my telegram asking for particulars, Mr Gulzarilal Nanda, the Labour Minister, informed me by his telegram dated 17th September, that he was writing to me shortly. I have not yet received any report for him. I am sending him a reminder by telegram. Meanwhile, I have been informed that the Ministry has not only refused public inquiry into the incident, but has started proceedings against 47 leading worker-members of the union under Section 144 CrPC. I am further informed that 30 out of these 47 persons are the more seriously injured including some whose legs and hands have been amputated. If this report is correct, it is shocking. The least the Congress Government can do is to withdraw criminal proceedings against these people and institute a public inquiry into the incident of firing. As matters stand now, the whole affair looks more like an attempt frightfulness [*sid*] associated with the bureaucratic Government. I am making this personal appeal to Mr B.C. Kher, the Premier, Mr Morarji Desai, the Home Minister, and Mr Gulzarilal Nanda, the Labour Minister to take the matter into personal consideration.

7. Eighth Labour Conference

Extracts from Report on Labour Policy and Administration during 1946-47, presented by Government of India at the Eighth Labour Conference held at New Delhi on 21 April 1947 under the aegis of the Department of Labour, and presided over by Jagjiwan Ram. File No. 572; Jayaprakash Narayan Papers (1946); Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

I. Five-Year Programme

1. A programme of legislative and administrative measures to be undertaken by Central and Provincial Governments with a view to bring about a substantial and marked improvement in the health, efficiency and working conditions and the standards of living of workers was placed before:

- (a) A Conference of Provincial Labour Ministers held on the 15th and 16th October, 1946;
- (b) A Conference of States Ministers held on the 29th and 30th November, 1946; and
- (c) A Conference of representatives of employers' and workers' organisations held on the 5th December, 1946....

2. The general consensus of opinion at the Conference of Provincial Labour Ministers held in October, 1946, was that as far as possible legislation should be central, Provinces being free to pursue more forward policies, wherever circumstances require or justify such action. There was also agreement that Central and Provincial Governments should regularly exchange information not only in regard to matters relating to industrial unrest but also in respect of important activities touching on labour policy and administration. To secure an effective coordination of policy and administration, it was unanimously decided that labour ministers should meet at least twice a year, and often if necessary, exchange notes, review the progress achieved so far and decide upon the future course of action.

3. The States Ministers, at the Conference held on the 29th November also agreed to the necessity of a coordinated labour policy and, to secure this objective to join the Ministers' Conference. Subject to such variations as may be found necessary to suit local conditions, States Ministers agreed to consider and give effect to such decisions as may be reached at the Ministers' Conference. They also agreed to the exchange of information referred to in para 2 above....

III. Mines

13. Government set up a Coalmines Wages Enquiry Committee in December 1946 to enquire into and recommend reasonable [reasonable] rates of wages for the different categories of workers in the collieries. Owing to certain unforeseen circumstances, the Committee could not start functioning. Meanwhile the situation in collieries deteriorated considerably. As a breakdown in coal production would have had serious repercussions on other industries, a Board of Conciliation was set up under the Trade Disputes Act, 1929, with Mr W.R. Puranik, Retired Judge of the Nagpur High Court as Chairman and four other members representing equally the employers and the labour. The Board is enquiring into the disputes existing or apprehended in the coalfields situated in the Provinces of Bengal and Bihar, with a view to promoting a settlement. It is expected to conclude its proceedings by about the middle of April....

V. Social Insurance

26. The Workmen's State Insurance Bill covering health Insurance, maternity benefit and employment injury for workmen employed in or in connection with work in perennial factories was introduced in the Central Legislative Assembly on the 6th November 1946 and circulated departmentally for eliciting public opinion. The Act as framed will apply to factory workers only. It is intended to extend the Scheme to other workers also, after sufficient experience is gained and the requisite administrative organisation is set up.

27. Work preliminary to the implementation of the Scheme has been started. Provincial Governments have been addressed regarding the organisation of the medical care and treatment to insured workers, which should be completed before the Scheme can be inaugurated. Employers have been addressed in regard to utilisation of the existing medical facilities provided by them.

VI. General

28. The Trade Unions Act, 1926, while it provides for registration of Trade Unions, does not impose any obligation on employers to recognise them. It has long been felt that in existing conditions in India, there should be some obligation laid on employers to recognise trade unions, provided they are truly representative. The Indian Trade Unions (Amendment) Bill seeks to meet this long felt need by providing for obligatory recognition of representative

trade unions. The Bill provides for the constitution of Labour Courts to decide disputes relating to the recognition....

32. As part of the five year programme prepared by this Department, steps would be taken to evolve, in agreement with employers and workers, fair terms of service particularly in regard to security of tenure and elimination of unjust reductions and discharges from service....

VII. Industrial Unrest and Industrial Disputes Act

39. The end of the war was followed by a war of industrial unrest and discontent which became more pronounced during the middle and later half of 1946. The more important demands put forward by the workers related to increase in wages and dearness allowance, security of service, recognition of union, supply of adequate and better quality of foodstuffs, grant of bonus, and improvement of working, living and service conditions. There were industrial disputes in Government undertakings relating to railways, ordnance, depots, ports, dockyards, mints, presses, P&T Department. Annexures II and III will give an idea of the number of strikes and threats of strikes in Central Government undertakings in 1946-47 and the stoppages of work as a result of strikes in the country.

The major disputes, namely, (i) Between the P&T Department and their workers and (ii) Between the All India Railwaymen's Federation and the Railway Administrations were referred to adjudication. In both the disputes, Mr Justice G.S. Rajadhyaksha was appointed the adjudicator. The main demands of the Postal employees was the determination of interim relief pending the findings of the Central Pay Commission. The award was made in July 1946. The railway dispute was in respect of retrenchment and for immediate increase in wages and bonus. The Adjudicator, Railway Dispute is expected to conclude his work by end of April, 1947....

Annexure II

Number of strikes and threats of strikes in the Central
Undertakings in the year ending 20th March 1947

Month & Year		Strikes & threatened strikes	Those which resulted in amicable settlement
April	1946	39	25
May	"	33	23
June	"	18	15
July	"	19	14
Aug.	"	10	9
Sept.	"	26	23
Oct.	"	24	24
Nov.	"	24	22
Dec.	"	33	31
Jan.	1947	41	38
Feb.	"	56	47
1-15 Mar.	"	16	11
		339	282

Annexure III

Month & Year	Number of stoppages	Number of stoppages in which wages were the principal cause	Number of workers	Man days lost
April 1946	185	74	3,13,083	13,74,482
May	180	76	2,46,381	12,41,703
June	157	61	1,69,589	8,72,931
July	205	77	2,66,455	11,27,832
August	194	89	1,52,227	6,46,627
September	120	55	1,19,282	6,88,870
October	115	41	1,65,948	7,94,604
November	120	33	1,62,767	17,27,803

Report from Sind

... During the year 1946-47, 40 additional trade unions have been registered bringing the total to 86....

Report from Madras

Soon after the Congress Ministry assumed office in May 1946 several industrial disputes arose in the Province, as a result of which, there were frequent strikes and lock-outs all over the Province. The Ministry received several memorials and even threats of direction action. The workers in their haste to secure redress of their long-standing grievances, had no proper advice and guidance from their leaders who were more importunate in their demands than the rank of file of the workers. The Government were not given sufficient time to mould the machinery of the Government not only to suit their policy but also to meet the situation created by the general labour unrest. The Government, however, lost no time in taking proper steps to meet the situation. The Minister for Industries and Labour issued the following statement on the 1st May 1946 setting forth in clear terms the policy of the Government in dealing with industrial disputes.

"It is the intention of the Madras Government to pass legislation regarding labour conditions at an early stage and appoint, if necessary, a permanent machinery, such as industrial courts, to ensure industrial peace....

The Industrial workers must realise they are citizens and also workers. They should have their rights and privileges both as citizens and as workers. They should feel this Government is their own Government and cooperate with others in helping it to run smoothly. Freedom of association, the Government wishes to make it clear, is assured to workers and their organisations....

"While it is not the intention of the Government to curtail in any manner the rights of workers and their right to direct action the Government feels it incumbent to declare that all available methods of representation should be exhausted before resorting to it." ...

As there were frequent disputes between the workers and the managements of textile mills in the Province, the Government appointed a Court of Inquiry to examine the conditions of labour in the textile mills. They appointed another Court of Inquiry to investigate and report on conditions of labour in the beedi, cigar, snuff, tobacco during establishments and tanneries in this Province. The final reports of these two courts of Inquiry are expected to be published

soon. As there was delay in the completion of the inquiry regarding textile labour, the workers were clamoring for grant of immediate relief pending the result of the Court of Inquiry. The Government referred the question of interim relief for textile workers for adjudication under the Defence of India Rules. The Adjudicator's award which gave substantial interim wage increases to textile workers, was accepted by Government. As the beedi and cigar workers in the West Coast and the tannery workers in West Godavari District resorted to strikes demanding similar interim relief the Government have referred the question of interim relief for these workers also for adjudication under the Defence of India Rules.

There was serious unrest in the Province due to the intense and widespread activities of trade unions under the influence of Communists and some extremist labour leaders. The main demands of the workers were for increase of wages, dearness allowance, bonus, leave facilities, gratuity, provident fund, etc. With a view to compel the employers to concede their demands, the labour unions resorted to threats of strikes and lightning strikes without making any attempts to get their grievances redressed by negotiation or conciliation. In several cases, the workers misled by inexperienced labour leaders and political agitators resorted to strikes without justification even after the Conciliation Officers had done their best for the workers. In some cases, the strikes had to be settled by ordering adjudication of such disputes....

Report from the Central Provinces and Berar

... During the year 1946-47 fifty-five new Unions were registered under the Indian Trade Unions Act, 1926. The classification by groups was as follows:

Railways (including Transport)	5
Textile	8
Printing	2
Municipal	11
Engineering	9
Miscellaneous	20
Total	55

Report from the United Provinces

1. ... With the close of the war and advent of the popular ministry in the province, the labour unrest accentuated by the gap in the cost of living and the rates of wages, and the general policy of retrenchment adopted by the mills, etc., came to the forefront and resulted in the spread of industrial disputes all over the province, particularly in industrial towns. To meet this Labour situation, the Provincial Government made a free use of rules 81A, Defence of India Rule as extended by the Emergency Provisions (Continuance) Ordinance, 1946 and appointed four Conciliation Officers. They also set up a member of Adjudication Boards under Rule 81A, of the Defence of India Rules. These measures have kept the number of industrial disputes within manageable limits. It was, however, felt that the situation demanded more elaborate legislation that was available under the Defence of India Rules....

This Government has introduced in the Provincial Legislature a Shops and Commercial Establishments Bill to regulate the conditions of work and service in commercial establishments, hotels and restaurants, etc. This Bill has been considered by the Select Committee and it will come up before the Assembly in the near future. This will give for workers in shops and commercial establishments and the clerical staff of the factories much needed relief in the matter of security of service, leave, working hours, etc....

A Provincial Trade Disputes Bill was introduced in the Assembly in August last to take the place of Rule 81A, Defence of India Rule, but it was withdrawn as a permanent industrial Disputes Act has been passed by the Central Legislature....

Report from Bengal

... The tendency on the part of workers of certain mills to resort to intimidation has been deprecated by the Hon'ble Minister in Conferences. The obstinacy of certain unions in opposing reference to adjudication has also been a serious obstacle in the solution of industrial disputes. This attitude on the part of the workers' union in the dispute concerning the Calcutta Tramway Company has been the principal cause of deadlock in the work of this concern. Government do not like to countenance such unconstitutional methods....

Figures of Strikers and Disputes 1946

Industries	No. of strikes	Men involved	Results			
			S	P	U	I
Cotton	39	66,786	2	7	20	10
Jute	79	2,76,037	5	7	55	12
Engineering	70	58,247	12	12	32	14
Transport	-	-	-	-	-	-
Docks	-	-	-	-	-	-
Mines	5	5,220	-	-	5	-
Railways	-	-	-	-	-	-
Miscellaneous	200	92,438	33	34	81	52
Total	393	4,95,728	52	60	193	88

S = Successful; P = Partially Successful;

U = Unsuccessful; I = Indefinite.

Causes of Disputes

Industry	Individual				General				Total
	D	W	S	M	D	W	S	M	
Jute	93	207	-	11	20	82	113	36	562
Cotton	11	2	-	-	2	3	39	10	67
Other Text.	7	4	-	-	5	23	187	4	230
Engineering	64	24	-	7	40	22	119	38	314
Elec. Sup. Cos	6	1	-	-	5	4	14	2	32
Municipality	2	1	-	1	-	3	29	2	38
Transport	25	6	-	4	13	15	64	11	138
Tea	-	2	-	3	1	1	26	5	38
Printing	4	-	-	-	3	30	250	3	290
Miscellaneous	97	74	-	25	68	52	208	50	574
Total	309	321	-	51	157	235	1,049	161	2,283

D = Discharge, Dismissal, etc.

W = Wages, DA, Bonus, etc.

S = Conditions of Service.

M = Miscellaneous.

Compared with the previous years the number has increased. A disquieting feature of the strikes is that a large number of them, actually 327 out of 380 have been commenced illegally, i.e., without notice....

The Trade Union Movement among workmen appear to be growing. In 1946, 283 new Unions were registered. This increase has been due to the numbers of the services and employees in the mercantile firms forming their Unions and registering them under the Trade Union Act....

3.B PEASANTS

3.B.i General

1. Congress and the Kisan Sabhas

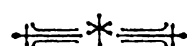
Extracts from a letter by Swami Sahajanand Saraswati to Jawaharlal Nehru; Biheta, 11 January 1946. Microfilm Roll No. 5; Swami Sahajanand Saraswati Papers (1946); Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

*Biheta, Patna,
11 January 1946.*

Dear Pandit Jawaharlalji,

I was glad to read your letter in reply to mine with regards to the existance [existence], necessity, status and function of the class organisations like the Kisan Sabha. I have noted carefully your words, "I think that in theory the kisans have a perfect right to organise themselves separately as industrial workers have.... Class organisations are necessary and inevitable in the present order of things." I am further glad to note that instead of stating that "the Congress itself is the kisan organisation par-excellence, you simply said that, "the Congress itself is becoming progressively a kisan organisation," although I am yet to be convinced of this latter assertion too. Doubtless while making this statement you have in mind naturally perhaps the UP Congress, I think. But your UP Congress is not the Congress. Maybe my information is wrong and incomplete, but so far as I know even now then is no Provincial Congress which interests itself in the detailed day to day grievance and problems of the kisans as the UP Congress does. It is why there is bound to be overlapping between Kisan Sabha and the Congress Committees in the UP which I like very much, and want that the UP position should be repeated elsewhere too. It is not unfortunately the case so far. Yes, any and every conflict must be avoided at present between the Congress and the Kisan Sabha and both must function together and it is the bounden duty of all of us to see that it is so. I quite agree with you that "In practice, however, their (kisans) position is considerably different in India at present." All the same I desire to discuss personally with you the whole thing including some of the implications of your remarks in that letter...."

Sincerely yours,
Swami Sahajanand Saraswati.



3.B.ii Bengal

1. Midnapore Tenants Stop Payment of Rents

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Bengal for the second half May 1946. File No. 18/546; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Political

12. The only other political activity of note has been provided by the Communist Party who in Midnapore have been active in organising opposition to the realisation of loans in the subdivision of Taniluk, and in two unions of the same subdivision have secured the stoppage of the payment of rent by tenants to local landlords....

2. Bengal Kisan Sabha Conference

Extracts from a report, 'Bengal Kisan Sabha Conference: Proceedings and Resolutions'. *People's Age*, 16 June 1946.

'The *aus* harvest is one-fourth of the original estimate.... The Government's purchasing policy has failed.... The surplus is flowing secretly into Bihar.... The price of rice is steadily rising.'

This was the report on the food situation in the surplus district of Dinajpur, given by Sushil Sen at the recent Bengal Provincial Kisan Conference held at Moubhoge in Khulna district. Sjt. Krishna Benode Roy presided.

It was a momentous session, because it met at a time when Bengal faces a repetition of the 1943 famine. The eyes of Bengal are turned on the kisan—for it is he who grows the food and it is he also, paradoxically enough, who suffers most in a famine.

Four hundred and fifty delegates from all parts of the Province assembled at Kisannagar—a marvel of peasant initiative, skill and efficiency, built by voluntary labour.

For three days and three nights—from the 21st to the 23rd of May—the delegates discussed the various resolutions placed before the Conference....

Resolutions

Even before the country has recovered from the effects of the famine of 1943, the dreadful spectre of another famine is on Bengal. This time the famine is not confined to Bengal only, it is an India-wide, nay worldwide problem. The problem of fighting famine in Bengal this time has become exceedingly complex due to the following reasons:

- (1) Complacent propaganda by officials during the Section 93 regime; failure of the Government in the matter of procurement; corruption among officials and wastage.
- (2) As a result of political disunity there has been dissension of an all-pervading nature among the people, which now stands in the way of all united movements.
- (3) The profiteers who have had a considerable grip over the machinery of supply and distribution, have taken full advantage of the prevailing political disunity and have been able to extend their influence to the political parties, too.

In the circumstances we have to come forward to solve the problem through the united efforts of the people. The following measures have to be effected through constant agitation in and outside the legislature:

- (a) Ceaseless efforts to import food grains from outside and to stop the despatch of food grains out of the Province.
- (b) Commandeering all stocks of food grains from the traders by the Government and direct purchase of food grains by the Government with popular cooperation. Effective measures will have to be taken for the procurement of *aus* crops.
- (c) Effective measures have to be adopted for price control and dehoarding.
- (d) Reconstitution of the existing food committees, which are hotbeds of corruption, on the basis of democratic election. Severe and summary measures have to be adopted against corrupt officials and profiteers.
- (e) For areas of scarcity and for destitute sections of the people:
 - (1) Supply of grain.
 - (2) Distribution of doles.
 - (3) Providing grain at cheap rates.
 - (4) Extension of work centres.

(f) To save the peasantry during the crisis and to prevent a thorough breakdown of production, the following measures have to be passed by the legislature:

- *Remission of arrears of rent and debt;
- *Suspension of collection of rent for the present year in the famine-stricken areas; Stoppage of eviction;
- Stoppage of land transfer;
- *Abolition of Section 48(c) of the Bengal Tenancy Act;
- *Return of land which had gone out of the hands of the peasants during the famine of 1943, and of land requisitioned by the Government during the war to the peasants;
- *Ban on keeping cultivable land fallow and distribution of such land among the peasants;
- *Initiation of small irrigational projects for growing more food and distribution of land benefited by the projects among the peasants.

This Conference is emphatically of the opinion that immediate legislation should be passed to the following effect:

- (1) Abolition of the permanent settlement and Zamindari system without any monetary compensation.
- (2) Abolition of all rent on the cultivable land, either in cash or in kind, either official or private.
- (3) To keep cultivable land fallow without serious reasons will be punishable by law.
- (4) Minimum wage for the agricultural labourer. Any attempt to employ labourers with less pay will be punishable.
- (5) Non-official rent on water, forest, etc., should be abolished.
- (6) After the abolition of all these rents, a graduated system of agricultural income tax should be introduced. People living near forests should have the unfettered right on them to pasturage and collection of fuel for their daily use.

To save Bengal from the clutches of chronic famine, apart from these revolutionary changes in land and rent system, we need further immediate action on the following lines:

- (1) To bring all cultivable fallow land under the plough, a well-planned irrigation scheme should be immediately taken in hand and the land thus brought under cultivation should be divided amongst landless labourers on the basis of economic holdings.

(2) To settle lands on the basis of economic holdings keeping the present cultivator on his land as far as possible.

(3) Legislation to prevent land from going uneconomic to the cultivators due to fragmentation.

(4) Arrangement for public pasturage and improvement of cattle.

(5) Opening of Government banks to advance [money for] ploughs, cattle, seeds, manure and other improved implements of agriculture all over the Province.

3. Bengal Sharecroppers' Tebhaga Uprising

Article, 'Bengal share-croppers resist new onslaught of zamindars'. *People's Age*, 15 December 1946.

In ten districts of Bengal today—some with Hindu, others with Muslim majorities—the *adhiars* (share-croppers) have begun a new battle against the age-long extortion and exploitation of the zamindars and jotedars.

Forty-one per cent of the total number of kisans in Bengal are share-croppers, and together they cultivate fifty per cent of the land.

They have no tenancy rights and can be thrown out at will. There is no legal contract with the landlords and as soon as they harvest their crop, they have to pay out the following dues:

*Half their crop goes immediately to the landlord as his 'share'.

*Interest on the paddy they borrowed earlier has to be paid at the rate of 100 to 300 per cent.

*Apart from this, illegal exactions of at least ten different sorts are made.

The result is that the *adhiar* is left with hardly a maund of paddy per bigha of land.

Since 1938

Against these inhuman conditions Bengal's kisans have fought since 1938, demanding that they should be protected by law and allowed two-thirds of the crop as their rightful share.

In 1940, the Kisan Sabha in a memorandum to the Floud Commissioner (Land Revenue Commission) put forward the demand for legislation guaranteeing two-thirds of the crop to the *adhiar*. And the Commission actually recommended that the *adhiars* be given tenancy rights and that no more than one-third of the crop should be legally recovered by the landlords.

This recommendation was and is supported by every single political party.

But all these years, the Government has failed to pass any legislation to protect the *adhiar* from the exploitation of the jotedar.

The New Offensive

On top of everything, the zamindars and jotedars have begun a new offensive.

Their control over the land used to give them in the past a net income of ten crore rupees from rents. But with the approach of famine, land meant food and crores more could be earned by hoarding.

In 1943, the zamindars and jotedars made an illegal profit of 159 crores out of the monopoly in food grains.

They greedily wanted to grab more and more land. With this end in view, they planned mass eviction of tenants and share-croppers.

When any *adhiar* came to them for a loan, they insisted that he sell them his land and cattle.

Harassment and extortion of illegal dues were continued till tenants were almost forced to leave their land to the vulture-zamindars.

Fight for Existence

Against this eviction campaign, in ten districts, the kisans are fighting back since November. It is a fight for their very existence.

Their slogans are:

We will not leave our land.

We shall take two-thirds of the crop—and not a grain less.

Here are glimpses of this new battle—the Battle of Tebhaga (two-thirds' share) as the *adhiars* call it.

On the last Bakr-Id-day, fifteen hundred Muslim kisans assembled in the mosque in Durgapur Union in the district of Jessore, to say their prayers. After the prayer was over a Muslim jotedar spoke on the need for 'separate defence' for Muslims.

But Nurjalal, the leader of the Sub-Divisional Kisan Sabha and the President of the Union Board, sprang to his feet and announced: "In a united meeting of the Namasudra and Muslim kisans, we have decided upon a campaign of Tebhaga and have formed a joint volunteer corps for the purpose. That joint corps will guarantee our crops as well as our defence."

Enraged, the Muslim jotedar declared that a Tebhaga campaign at this time would lead to communal riots and must be abandoned.

Nurjalal demanded that the matter be decided by vote. The Imam counted the votes. Only five were against Tebhaga and for separate defence.

Joint Committee Formed

After the meeting, Nurjalal came out to meet Bholanath and other representatives of Hindu kisans who were eagerly waiting for them. On November 15, fifteen hundred representative Hindu and Muslim kisans from 40 villages spread over nine unions assembled to take the final decision about the Tebhaga campaign.

The decision was taken, a Joint Committee for running the campaign was formed and under it a joint volunteer corps and a Tebhaga Fund were started.

Cash was raised then and there and the Committee started functioning. The movement spread fast in several other thanas and sub-divisions.

Within three days, the kisans were harvesting and carrying the paddy to their own homes. "Every man or woman a volunteer" was the slogan and every village gave 100 regular volunteers. The volunteers began marching from village to village, holding baithak meetings and harvesting the paddy wherever it was ripe.

Zamindars Organise

Babu Dhirendra Nath Roy, former Congress MLA and his family are the zamindars of Narail. They organised a meeting of zamindars, jotedars, tenure holders and usurers to devise ways and means to crush the movement.

Besides seeking police help, they requisitioned the services of one Chandra Kanta Bose, a Congressman of Faridpur, who had organised the excavation of canals for the kisans and wields some influence over Hindu kisans. He went from house to house to incite Hindu kisans against the movement.

But the trick did not work. They had learnt the meaning of uniting with their Muslim brother—*adhians*, and with the Red flag flying they marched in thousands from union to union carrying the new message to the kisans.

On November 18, in the Sundarbans (within 24-Parganas), 7000 Hindu-Muslim and Santhal kisans assembled in the Dak Bungalow maidan of Kakdwip to take a decision regarding Tebhaga.

Two thousand Hindu-Muslim volunteers, with lathis in their hands came marching for 20 to 30 miles with the slogans—"We want Tebhaga". The decision was taken even before the formal assembly met.

The zamindars and jotedars were at their wits' end. They hired lathials and sent them to forcibly take away the ripe paddy of Jatin Malty. On reaching the land, the lathials saw kisans with Red flags guarding the crop.

But the lathials are themselves kisans; though of a different locality, the message of the Red flag had reached them too. They saluted the Red flag and went back.

A few days later, the zamindar mobilised local Congress leaders to carry on a slander campaign against the Communists. And simultaneously they sent another batch of lathials to reap the crops of a leading kisan.

No Going Against Samiti

They failed again. The local kisans exposed the whole game to the lathials and appealed to them in the name of the Kisan Sabha to go to back for the sake of the common interests of the kisans.

The lathials again said: "We cannot go against the Samiti," and went away.

But the zamindars would not stop. A kisan of village Shibrampur had carried his own paddy to his own thrashing yard. Suddenly the *chakdar* (the landlord) sent a gang of his hirelings to the house of the kisan. He was physically seized, tied with a rope and carried away to the office of the zamindar.

But the news spread and instantaneously 1200 sturdy volunteers with lathis marched to the zamindar's office, surrounded it and threatened the zamindar's men with extermination, unless their comrade was released immediately. They marched back in a procession with their comrade.

Sobering Effect

This incident has brought some of the landlords to their senses and they are trying to come to terms with the Kisan Sabha.

In Kishoreganj and Netrakona sub-divisions of Mymensingh, the Tebhaga demand is being taken up by the kisans, and in union after union kisans are uniting against the zamindars' injustice.

The zamindars are raising the communal bogey and taking police help. The Hindu and Muslim kisans are using the weapon of social boycott of the landlords and carrying on their harvesting.

Lalit Bagchi, a big jotedar, has recently written a letter to the District Kisan Sabha appealing for the withdrawal of the boycott. His servants have left him; his washermen have refused to wash his clothes; the fisherman won't sell his fish to him, the milkman would not go to his house. Unable to bear this any further, he has surrendered to the Kisan Sabha.

In the districts of Dacca, Pabna and Howrah, similar struggles are going on.

In the North Bengal districts of Dinajpore, Jalpaiguri and Rangpore, paddy is not yet ripe for harvesting, but thousands of volunteers and lakhs of kisans are preparing for the coming battle.

There is a Muslim League Ministry in office in Bengal.

But the Ministry has not found time to pass legislation embodying even the recommendations of the Flood Commission and save the *adhiars* from starvation.

While the Ministry sits tight, the police and the bureaucracy are unleashing all their forces against this kisan upsurge. Already more than 500 kisans and Kisan Sabha workers have been prosecuted and yet more are to come.

“Nothing can Stop Us”

But the kisans shall not falter nor fall. Bachha Mia, a Muslim kisan of Jalpaiguri, told me: “We must fight on because we cannot live without fighting. We must reap our paddy and deliver it safely to our family, and in doing this, face jail or bullets. If we die, we are saved from our present sufferings; if we live and are seized by the police, we shall ride the Red motor and march into jail. Nothing can stop us.”

4. League Ministry Blamed for Police Zulum Against Sharecroppers

News report, ‘Hindus and Muslims both are victims’. *Free Press Journal*, 16 December 1946.

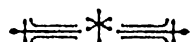
Calcutta, December 15. Mr Bhowani Sen, Secretary, Bengal Provincial Committee, Communist Party of India has issued the following statement:

“In Mymensingh, Dinajpore and other districts of Bengal the police repression has been let loose on kisans who have been demanding two-thirds of the paddy crops they produce with the sweat of their brow. That their demand is just and legitimate cannot be denied by anybody, even the Royal Commission on Land Revenue known as the Flood Commission recommended this as just as early as in 1940. For these 6 years peasants waited patiently to see that this just demand is conceded by Jotedars or by an Act of legislature. But both the Jotedars and the successive ministries have disappointed them. Today the Bengal Government is aiding the Jotedars with police force to suppress the legitimate movement of the peasants who want to get what is due to them in the most peaceful way.

“Kisans, both Hindus and Muslims are today victims of a brutal repression in Mymensingh and Dinajpore and it is astounding that the League Ministry is not holding the hands of the bureaucrats.

“A number of Jotedars out of their sense of justice have accepted the peasant demand and they deserve congratulation for the patriotic step they have taken. But the richest of the Jotedars instead of following that course, have chosen the path of taking police aid and to coerce the poor tillers of the soil into submission.

“By helping the Jotedar to suppress the kisans’ peaceful and legitimate fight the bureaucracy is committing a serious crime against the famine-stricken people of Bengal. The League Ministry must stop this crime and fulfil its duty towards its own people. I appeal to all leaders of the trade union movement and to all fighters for freedom and democracy to stand by the kisans and stop police zulum.”



5. Somnath Hore's Diary

An eyewitness account of the Tebhaga movement. Somnath Hore, *Tebhaga: An Artist's Diary and Sketchbook* (trans. S. Zutshi; Calcutta, 1990).

18.12.46

... In the afternoon on the way to Domar, I met Rupnarayan, the comrade from Dinajpur, who told me heroic tales about the Tebhaga movement. The police had gone to a village in Rampur to put up a show of strength against the peasants. In the process they got a proper hammering from the peasant women. Some policemen had their limbs broken, whilst others had broken rifle butts.... The jotedars were failing to check the speed of the movement in spite of their concerted efforts....

... Ramnarayan said, "The peasants are organised in the villages. They are saying, 'We will harvest the crop and store it ourselves, and give the landlord his share. He'll have to accept what we allot him. And should his thugs or the police turn up, we'll face them and not show our backs.'"

19.12.46

... The meeting took place as scheduled at night under the open sky on the straw laid out on the ground inside the roofless shed of a sharecropper (adhiyar) ... with close to two hundred sharecroppers and peasants attending.... The place began to resound with slogans: 'We want our two-thirds (tebhaga), not just half (adhi)'; 'No rice without a receipt'; 'No interest on rice loans'; 'Remove the harvest to your own homes'; 'Krishak Samiti Zindabad'; 'Inquilab Zindabad'.... Since arriving at this village, there's one word which I have heard frequently: Freedom. "The peasant is winning his freedom," they say. As I entered the village this morning, a young sharecropper said, "We are free at last." ...

20.12.46

.. The harvesting was to start this morning.... About a hundred and fifty people had gathered, with virtually everyone carrying a sickle and a lathi. Even children of five or six were carrying sickles or holding up banners.... The red flag was raised in the middle of the field. The boundaries were indicated with flags.... People broke into song, "Your red flags, your red salute, O peasant". The rice was harvested to the rhythm of the song. Even the elderly, those whose faces were lined with age, joined the song.... The peasant whose crop, was being harvested lived close by. People went in groups to store it for him. The women of his household were watching the harvesting with rapt attention. The red flag was flying over his house. These days the red flag had more auspicious potential than the traditional stalk of plantain and the sacred clay pitcher beside the door.... I had found out from talking to them that they considered Kali Puja their greatest festival. Yet I don't think even Kali Puja had ever occasioned as much joy as today's harvesting....

6. The Battle for Tebhaga in Mymensingh

News report, 'Share-croppers battle for new harvest'. *People's Age*, 22 December 1946.

Calcutta, December 14. In Bengal's biggest district, Mymensingh, with its 60 lakhs of Hindus and Muslims, over 67 per cent are share-cropping kisans living all the year round on starvation level. Today it is among them that a big battle for new harvest is taking place in hundreds of

villages which has stirred to action both Hindu and Muslim kisans against bloodsucking jotedars and talukdars.

The jotedars are insisting on two things: the kisan must bring the entire harvest from the field to his barn and he must be given as much as half the stock with the kisan getting the other half and bearing all expenses of production.

The Kisan Samiti raised two demands: the entire harvest from the field must go to the kisan's home and from there one-third will be given to the jotedar, or half of the costs plus half of the harvest to be given to the kisan.

In the middle of November the struggle began and the kisans came in immediate conflict with the jotedars everywhere. Many of the smaller jotedars readily agreed to a settlement and in view of their position they were given favourable terms at least for this year.

For instance, at Chatla in Kishoreganj, the Kisan Samiti set up an Arbitration Court and as many as 50 smaller jotedars immediately agreed to settle up and abide by the settlement. Richer jotedars, however, stubbornly refused.

Social Boycott

At Chatla big jotedars Lalit Bagchi and Fatik Bagchi called the police to terrorise the kisans.

As a result the kisans have put them under complete social boycott and Lalit jotedar is left without a servant, cook, barber, washerman or a scavenger.

Most remarkable is the solidarity of Hindu and Muslim kisans in the common battle for new harvest. Mymensingh is a Muslim majority district with the bulk of jotedars being Hindus and the bulk of the kisans being Muslims, yet the Tebhaga battle instead of dividing Hindus and Muslims has soldered their bonds stronger than ever before.

Everywhere Hindu and Muslim kisans have flocked to the ranks of the Kisan Samiti volunteers. In many places, as at Rasidabad, Karimganj, Neamatpur, Muslim jotedars are ranged in battle against Hindu-Muslim kisans.

Police and Goonda Aid

The jotedars are trying every means in their power to suppress this united battle. They are sending hired goondas to intimidate and assault the peasants. They are mobilising and getting police aid to punish the share-croppers.

But most of all, they are trying directly to rouse communal passions and disrupt this mighty joint movement against them; at Nalithari, Hindu jotedars and talukdars evicted many Dalu and Hindu kisans, and let out their plots to newly called Muslim share-croppers.

In the two sub-divisions of Netrakona and Kishoreganj this battle for new harvest has turned into a regular battle against the atrocities of the police and bureaucracy. On November 25, Governor Burrows visited Mymensingh and in his conference with non-official leaders openly alleged that there were some "instigators" behind the movement.

The absence of any protest from them gave the line clear to the Governor's lieutenants to launch an offensive against Kisan Samiti workers.

Within one week a reign of terror started. Over 300 Kisan Samiti men were served with warrants for refusing harvesting under pleas of Section 144. In two unions of Bangla and Kailati nearly 500 are being prosecuted. 100 being hunted and warrants against 61 are still pending. Twenty local leaders are banned from certain areas while leading district leaders like Moni Singh and Alabal are banned entry.

On December 3 it is reported that the District Magistrate issued orders to Government officials that in every case a jotedar called for help immediately it must be responded with police and who would enforce 50:50 sharecropping and would arrest anybody who resisted. The SDO of Netrakona has been reported to have openly told the jotedars, "You frame your case well and I will teach the Communists a lesson."

Biggest Offensive

On December 6 came the biggest offensive: village after village in Sinher Bangla Union was combed by the police who arrested district leaders, Pulin Baksi and Maulvi Fazalali. Blind kisan Ekdil was also assaulted. They were given no bail and it is even reported that local bureaucrats are trying to enforce a special ordinance to detain leaders without trial.

Meanwhile nearly 40 Hindu-Muslim kisan houses were raided by the police. They abused and insulted women; they turned out a kisan woman with a new born baby, and many were thrown out. They demanded money from some, destroyed utensils, vegetables, house fences and even crops in the field.

Throughout, the local talukdar was seen with the police. The District Magistrate also announced by beat of drums in Netrakona that all share-croppers must surrender half their stock to the jotedar and bring the entire stock to the jotedars' barn.

The same thing was seen in Kishoreganj; on December 4 Haranath Mandal, a scheduled caste kisan, was arrested and kept in jotedar Lalit Barman's house. His family too was threatened and his stock of paddy was seized.

On December 8 the Additional District Magistrate arrested a number of kisan leaders at Banigram as they were giving accounts of oppression by jotedars. Leaders of the Peace Committee at Chatla, Amar Bagchi and Narendra Das, were arrested, and with them a number of Hindu and Muslim kisans were also arrested.

But despite all repression, Mymensingh's kisan marches on. In the Red kisan stronghold of Surang on December 8, 5000 Hajang kisan volunteers, men and women, with lathis defied Sec. 144 and held a rally despite armed police, brought to terrorise them. "Even if we lose our lives, we must hold this rally," they said and resolved to raise 10,000 volunteers in 15 days.

This is the way the Battle for Tebhaga has almost spontaneously thrown up new and unknown warriors in freedom's army confronting the bureaucrats from Burrows downward.

Bigger Battle Ahead

But whatever the net outcome, the Mymensingh kisan knows that this is only the first round, for, immediately after the tussle for harvest will come the battle for tenancy as the jotedars are sure to try to evict en masse this fighting army of share-croppers.

Hindu and Muslim kisans of Mymensingh are getting ready for bigger battles in the coming months enriched by the experience of past few weeks.

7. Bengal Press and the Tebhaga Movement

Article, 'The Bengal press and Tebhaga Movement'. *People's Age*, 22 December 1946.

The sharecroppers' battle of Bengal finds little space in Bengal's press, despite the fact that it embraces eleven districts and has stirred no less than fifty lakh kisans. What little does appear is a shameless justification of the rapacity of the jotedars and an unblushing condemnation of the share-croppers' courageous defence of their rightful share of the crop they produce.

The *Ananda Bazar Patrika* (Sjt Sarat Bose's supporter) has attacked the Tebhaga movement as "an attempt to create disorder". According to it, it is not possible for the movement to stem clear of communalism.

Yet it has not been able to quote a single instance where peace was disturbed because of the Tebhaga movement or communalism roused from the side of the kisans.

The Goenka-owned Khadiite daily *Bharat* has condemned the Tebhaga movement because it "breeds class-struggle", and even quotes approvingly the threat by the Mymensingh District Magistrate to crush the Tebhaga movement. The jotedars must be delighted!

The pro-Congress daily *Jugantar* published the following message from its Jessore correspondent: "For the last few years, the local kisans have seen the face of plenty. But as a result of this movement the prosperity of many of them is threatened and jeopardised."

Prosperity indeed! Thousands of kisans lost their lands and even their lives due to hunger—but the *Jugantar* sees the kisans' "prosperity".

Shyamaprasad's daily *Hindustan* wrote with innocent simplicity: "If he who tills the land can have the right to own it, then he who himself or his forefathers have purchased the land with their hard-earned money also can have the right to it."

The jotedars had found their theoretician at last. But the theory is hardly necessary. The share-croppers are giving the landlords their rightful share only because their forefathers purchased the land.

The League daily *Azad* has expressed sympathy for the share-croppers, but it has hesitated to support the kisans' demand for two-thirds share of crop. Mr Hashim's *Millat* (representing the progressive opinion inside the League) has so far not said a word about the struggle.

Neither Congress nor League papers carry a word of condemnation for the repression let loose by the League Ministry on the kisans.

8. Somnath Hore's Diary

An eyewitness account of the Tebhaga movement. Somnath Hore, *Tebhaga: An Artist's Diary and Sketchbook* (trans. S. Zutshi; Calcutta, 1990).

23.12.46

... Hindu sharecroppers consider the Congress their enemy. Muslim sharecroppers have similar feelings about the Muslim League. They consider the Congress and the League the dens of the landlords....

24.12.46

... On the way back from the market, I overheard a conversation between two persons. One was saying to the other, "If I take part in the movement this year, the jotedar won't give me any land next year. Where do I get my land, then?" The other man asked, "But don't you have your plough and a pair of bullocks?" The first man replied, "Yes, I do". Promptly the other man said, "That's all you need. The landlord can't physically remove the land, can he?" I realised that the demand of 'land to the tiller' was being born in the womb of the Tebhaga movement....

26.12.46

... At night, a peasant comrade sang for us. I could see for myself tonight how a new culture was taking root in the ordinary man's life through the activities of the Communist Party. The

comrade first sang one of our peasant songs and followed this up with an old folk song from Rangpur ... which drew little response from the audience. He then sang "*Dukker rater ghor tamasa bhedi* (Piercing, the grim darkness of our night of grief)" and the entire audience kept time with him.... After this, one patriotic song followed another and the entire audience, young and old, joined in. They asked for the words that they could not comprehend to be explained, and then sang them again.... These were songs on the elections and voting, on the peasants' daily requirements—cooking oil, salt, fuel—and more patriotic songs. I realised for the first time that these songs which had brought a momentary thrill to our lives had now become part of the culture of everyday life....

9. Tenancy Bill in Bengal Assembly

News report, 'Bengal Kisans Wage Their Biggest Struggle', by Nikhil Chakravarty. The parenthesised comments preceding the report are by the editor of the newspaper. The article is reproduced in full below, including the extract marks in the original. *People's Age*, 29 December 1946.

Calcutta, December 22. (We publish below a report from our Bengal correspondent on the Tebhaga movement—the share-croppers' struggle for two-thirds of the produce of the land they cultivate. This struggle, which has already spread to eleven districts (see *People's Age*, December 15 and 22) is the biggest struggle which Bengal's kisans have ever launched. They are harvesting the crop despite the severest repression and terror, taking their rightful two-thirds and leaving the rest for the landlord.

Wherever the Tebhaga movement is on, Hindu and Muslim kisans are solidly united, a firm guarantee that communal riots shall not take place—Editor).

In a Press note issued on December 17, the Bengal Government stated that it was giving its "anxious consideration" to the share-croppers' struggle "with a view to providing for a satisfactory solution of the question." The statement "urged the landlords in their own interests to accommodate the *bargadars*."

In the still confidential Draft Tenancy Bill, prepared by the Bengal Secretariat—which is to be moved in the coming session of the Bengal Assembly—the Government recognises unequivocally the right for which the kisans are fighting.

I understand that one of its clauses runs as follows: "No person who has let out his land on *barga* shall recover more than one-third of the produce."

But despite this recognition of the justness of the peasants' demands, despite the Government's own instructions to the jotedars to "accommodate" the share-croppers, the police and bureaucracy in the districts have started an open offensive against the kisans participating in the Tebhaga movement.

No Longer Mere Economic Struggle

The battle of Bengal's share-cropping kisans has thus today passed beyond a mere economic struggle against the jotedars and zamindars, the whole apparatus of Bengal's notorious steel-frame bureaucracy is being clamped down on them.

At first the bureaucrats thought that by arresting or intimidating the Kisan Sabha leaders they would be able to stifle the movement. But now realising that Bengal's share-cropper of 1946 is determined to take his own just share out of the harvest without waiting for any sahib's permission, they have let loose an orgy of repression on him.

Reports from every centre of the struggle—whether it is Alokhola in Dinajpur, Kendemari in Midnapore or Narail in Jessore or Netrokona in Mymensingh, all repeat one story: police terror—Section 144, arrests under Sub-sections 107 and 379, vandalism in village after village, destroying the poor kisans' property, assaulting kisan women and forcible seizure of paddy, leading to open clashes with the determined kisan men and women.

Referring to the struggle of Hajang and Dalu kisans of Nalitbari area, the District Magistrate of Mymensingh, in his fortnightly confidential report, to his bosses in the Bengal Secretariat, wrote on December 10: "The SDO has taken appropriate action under law; but it is reported by the Superintendent of Police that it has not produced the desired result. The Superintendent of Police has asked for action under the Special Powers Ordinance 45 against a number of leaders."

The District Magistrate in his report then expresses utter helplessness under the existing law. He goes on to quote a note from the SDO Netrokona: "Occasionally on being led by them (Communists) the *bargadars* of Kailaty and Singher Bangla Unions in Netrokona have commenced reaping away the entire quantity of paddy of each land to their own houses instead of taking it to the houses of landlords according to the prevailing customs.... Under the existing law we could give very little protection to the landlord."

"In some specific cases where people other than actual *bargadars* reaped away the paddy at the instigation of the Communists, I have issued some non-bailable warrants against offenders on receipt of complaints from landlords."

In practice under this plea, the SDO has started arresting Kisan Sabha workers. The District Magistrate also refers to the demand by the Police Superintendent for action under the Special Powers Ordinance against the Communists of Netrokona and continues: "Similar action has been asked for by the Additional District Magistrate who is now at Kishoreganj against a number of Communists of the Sub-Division."

Officials Trying Their Tricks

Mymensingh officials are also trying other tricks. On December 13, the Additional District Magistrate called a conference at Netrokona of jotedars, share-croppers and Communist Party representatives. Here the jotedar refused to come to any terms and openly threatened the kisans while the Magistrate slyly kept quiet. But immediately after this meeting was over, armed police raided the Kisan Sabha and Communist Party offices and arrested 17 kisan leaders.

All over the district in every *hat* (market) the District Magistrate has announced by the beat of drums that share-croppers trying to change the present iniquitous practice would be punishable by law.

Even the police is being lent to help the jotedars reap the harvest. At Nilaganj two constables were found working as day labourers for the local jotedar. But the kisans now are fighting in self-defence—they will not stand any further encroachments on their rights.

In Jessore, the 'T' 'haga movement has also had to face severe police repression, but the kisan is battling with unabated zeal. From Abhoynagar, armed police reported back to their headquarters: "After posting guards, the kisans are cutting away paddy at four times their usual speed. Unless large-scale arrests are made, no grain will come to the landlords."

Indiscriminate Arrests: Villages Combed Out

This was followed by indiscriminate arrests and the combing out of villages by armed police.

In Dinajpur, a stronghold of the organised kisan movement, the Tebhaga struggle has just started getting into its stride. The district authorities at first thought of stopping it by intimidation. They called a conference of all parties on December 9 and demanded that the movement should be stopped "to create a peaceful atmosphere for negotiations" (which is really to get the paddy secure in the jotedars' possession).

When they could not get that accepted by the Communist leaders, they next tried to frighten them by saying that big jotedars with their money and men are strong enough to crush the kisans.

When even that did not work, they threw out an open challenge that in two days, they would smash the movement by arresting all leaders (though actually they had already arrested 14 kisan leaders including the District Secretary of the Communist Party, and yet the movement had gained in volume day by day).

The District Intelligence Branch is sending panicky reports to their central office. A fortnight ago in their report they stated that though Tebhaga at present is directed against jotedars, really it is endangering the safety of the Government; and this they sought to prove by extensive quotations from speeches of kisan leaders and concluded by saying that without "stern measures" specially against the leaders, it could not be checked.

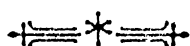
Circulars have been sent out to thanas to keep a special watch on the Communists; a circular even said that the Central Government too is contemplating declaring the Communist Party illegal.

District officials are often meeting local Congress and League leaders and putting across the line that the Provincial Congress and League leaderships are all against Tebhaga and that it will heighten communal tension.

But all the Government repression and their false propaganda are merely betraying its utter impotence when faced by the determined kisans. The movement is spreading to new areas in the 24-Parganas, etc., where the Kisan Sabha has never been known before. The spirit of the kisans is unbroken.

Krishna Benode Roy, President of the Bengal Kisan Sabha, who is now touring the North Bengal sector of the struggle, has written about a small incident in Rangpur: "As I was entering the village of Bargacha near Domar, kisan men and women flocked round me and with irrepressible exuberance went on narrating stories of their triumphant harvesting and how they are fighting the local jotedars. One kisan with a great deal of emotion exclaimed: 'Rangpur is going to be free'. Ghulam Aziz, another kisan, corrected him: 'Not only Rangpur, but the whole of Bengal is going to be free; nobody can stop us.'"

This is the spirit that has soldered Bengal's Hindu and Muslim kisans and no show of force can today terrify him.



3.B.iii MADRAS

1. Mylavaram Hindu Mahasabha at Odds with Communists and League

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Madras Province for the first half of June 1946. File No. 18/6/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Political

... At Mylavaram in Kistna district the adherents of the Hindu Mahasabha were responsible for an attack on the local supporters of the Muslim League and the Communist Party. The Mahasabha in the village is stated to have been led by a prominent landowner who is also the President of the Panchayat Board. The Communists criticised the President for the unauthorised and irregular sale of surplus petrol lights and he is alleged to have instigated his supporters to attack the Communists and the Muslims who are linked together by the common dislike of the Hindu Mahasabha. Stones, sticks and spears were freely used and there was some looting of shops and damage to houses. The situation is now quiet.

2. Kisans of Tanjore Unhappy with Ministry

Article, 'Tanjore kisans take possession of *mirasdars*' lands'. *People's Age*, 18 August 1946.

The kisans of Tanjore district in Tamilnad are on the warpath against the callous oppression of the *mirasdars* (landlords).

Thirty thousand acres of land in thirty-two villages are lying fallow because of the refusal of the *mirasdars* to agree to give their tenants an adequate share of the produce. For years the tenants have received only one-fifth of the crop they produce. They now demand more, "half the produce for the man who tills" is their slogan. Years of impoverishment have made this a matter of life and death for them today.

Four hundred tenant cultivators and three hundred agricultural labourers have been turned out of their ancestral homes and land by the inhuman *mirasdars* in one taluka alone. Their crime was that they demanded better terms from their lords.

Thousands of families face starvation as the sowing season rapidly comes to an end and land remains fallow.

Ministers Visit Tanjore

The kisans had expected that the Congress Ministry would support them against the rapacious *mirasdars*, but they lost all hope on July 27, when the Ministers of Law and Food, Mr Bhashyam and Mr Raghavan Menon, paid a visit to Tanjore.

They came at the request of the *mirasdars* who objected to the award of an adjudicator (the Sessions Judge of Tanjore) appointed earlier by the Ministry itself to go into the dispute between the peasants and the *mirasdars*.

This award, though it fell far short of the kisans' demands, was accepted by them as they felt it was the verdict of People's Ministry and it would be wrong to challenge it. The *mirasdars* also signed an undertaking to abide by the award.

But they changed their mind pretty soon and prevailed on the Ministry to scrap the award.

Welcoming the Ministers

Privately the *mirasdars* arranged for the visit of the two Ministers. But the kisans got to know quick enough. And three thousand kisans gathered to welcome the Ministers with the slogans:

"We want land for cultivation".

"We will grow food".

"We will drive away the second famine".

"We demand an equal share in the crop we grow".

"Congress Ministry Zindabad".

The *mirasdars*, enemies of the Congress all their lives, today appeared in spotless khadi carrying national flags, to hide, if it could be hid, the fact that they had acquired their land by the usurious exploitation of the kisans.

The Ministers were very much impressed. Still more when the *mirasdars* feasted them, breaking all ration rules at a cost of two thousand rupees.

Kisans' Demand "Absurd"

Minister Raghava Menon sermonised to the kisans: "You must look on the *mirasdars* as your fathers." *Mirasdars* solemnly nodded their heads at this 'excellent' piece of advice.

As for the kisans' demand that they should get an equal share in the crop, the Minister characterised it as absurd, because—just listen to this marvellous apology for exploitation: "The *mirasdars* spend three thousand rupees for a marriage in their family, while a kisan spends only fifteen rupees. Income must be in accordance with expenditure!"

"Conciliation"

On July 28, the Ministers fixed a Conference at Nidamangalam. Four thousand kisans walked to attend it—twenty miles in the scorching sun. Before the Conference began, the Ministers had a private meeting with the *mirasdars* in the Travellers' Bungalow, after which they emerged to listen to the arguments advanced by the *mirasdars'* representative (N.R. Samiappa, a well known toady, member of the old loyalist Justice Party and one of the richest *mirasdars* in the district) and by the kisans' representative B. Srinivasa Rao.

From then on, the Ministers seemed to do all the arguing for the *mirasdars*.

They scrapped the Sessions' Judge's award and imposed a new one, though both admitted they had not seen it! They shouted and fumed when they were told that it was fantastic that they should discuss an award they had not even seen.

"Let Them Die"

They refused to lift a finger to have the ejected tenants reinstated.

"I don't care if they die of starvation," yelled Mr Bhashyam, "I will not interfere in the rights of the *mirasdars* to eject their tenants until the law is changed."

As regards the increase in the share of the crop demanded by the kisans, Mr Bhashyam sarcastically asked to the applause of the *mirasdars*: "How is it that you have managed all these years with one-fifth share? How has it suddenly become inadequate?"

Sharply the kisans replied: "At no time was one-fifth enough. We have been steadily impoverished all these years. Now we can bear it no longer."

“Crush The Communists”

Finally at the end of the Conference, when the kisans declared that they could not possibly accept Mr Bhashyam's new award which meant starvation for them, the Minister jumped up from his seat and began to fume against the leaders of the kisans: “They are Communists, who betrayed in 1942. You must take measures to oust them from among the kisans.”

Up sprang the *mirasdar* leader: “Give us protection and we will crush these Communists.”

“We will certainly give you protection”, was the assurance given by the Minister for Food.

“I am the Minister for Law,” said Mr Bhashyam, “I will see you get protection.”

That was the end of the Conference.

The kisans' last hope—the Popular Ministry—had crashed.

Into Their Own Hands

In the meanwhile the very last days of the sowing had come. More delay meant starvation for the whole of the coming year.

And so early this month, the kisans gave the slogan: “We refuse to starve to death! Let us fight for food and life!”

And the struggle began. Kisan after kisan entered the land and began to dig up the earth, plough it in order to make it yield food for his family.

The *mirasdars* have requisitioned the services of the police to prevent the kisans from cultivating the land. By August 6, sixty-seven kisans, including the kisan leader Dr Janakiram, had been arrested in Konerirajapuram area alone on a charge of trespass. In Mannargudi area, the *mirasdars* have employed gangs of goondas and rowdies to beat up the peasants as they enter the land.

The kisans will win. They will fight. Not all the police and the goondas can crush them. Their cause is just. There is strength in their arms.

3. Ramnad Kisans Fight for a Better Deal

Article, ‘Landlords let 10,000 acres of wet land lie fallow’. *People's Age*, 15 September 1946.

About a hundred kisans, men and women, were arrested last month and taken to the Police Station with their manure baskets and carts in Watrap Firka, Ramnad, which is the most deficit and famine-stricken district of Tamilnad. And for what? For daring to plough 10,000 acres of wet land which the landlords had threatened to leave fallow just at a time when the food situation in the Province has become most acute!

This is how the Prakasam Ministry is carrying on its “Grow More Food” policy.

These 10,000 acres belong to absentee landlords and are cultivated on the sharecropping system by about 3000 kisan families who are tenants-at-will.

The basis of the sharecropping till this year was that 1/3 of the gross produce went to the tenant, 2/3 to the landlord. And out of this 1/3 share of the tenant five kinds of illegal exactions were taken by the landlord; what was left was 1/4 of the gross produce. And out of this 1/4 share which was left, the tenant, in addition, had to bear the entire cultivation costs which come[s] to nearly half the gross produce!

This was the iniquitous system under which the peasants of the district have been systematically pauperised by a handful of parasitic absentee landlords and most of them reduced to heavy indebtedness to the landlords and usurers.

Kisan Sabha Formed

This loot has been going on because the kisans were so far unorganised and helpless to fight it. But the formation of the Kisan Sabha under the Red flag changed all that.

The Kisan Sabha united all sections of the kisans and fought the first round of battle last February. It got all the illegal exactions abolished and secured for the tenant, as an immediate temporary measure, 40 per cent of the gross produce.

Twenty thousand kisans, men, women and children, gathered at the third Provincial Kisan Sabha Conference held at Watrap on June 9, and put forward the demand for 50 per cent of the gross produce to the tiller.

How modest this demand was can be seen from the fact that 50 per cent of the gross produce is no more than the bare agricultural expenses the kisan has to pay out of his share—and what would remain for him afterwards is only hay.

The landlord-parasites refused to concede even this minimum demand of those who were the actual tillers of the soil and producers of food.

For two months—June and July—the Kisan Sabha kept on submitting memoranda to the Congress Ministry seeking its intervention to concede the just demands of the tillers. But the Ministry did not move.

In August, at a “Congress Kisan Conference”, organised in the district (what was kisan only in name, but was really organised and prepared by the landlords), Congress Minister Bhakthavatsalam and Tamilnad Congress President, Kamaraj Nadar, came out attacking the Kisan Sabha and the Red flag and supporting the landlord parasites.

Landlords Get Line Clear

The landlords got their line clear from this. Rather than yield to the kisan a share which would leave him at least hay for his living, they refused to let the kisan manure and plough the land. They were prepared to leave 10,000 acres of wet land lie fallow.

The kisans again made repeated representations to the Ministry and the officials, but to no purpose. They were finally left with the alternatives—either they go and plough the land themselves, landlord or no landlord; or, they let 10,000 acres go fallow at a time of Province-wide scarcity and starve themselves in the bargain. They chose the former.

On August 15, the kisans began manuring the fields. On the 17th—the Circle Inspector came to Watrap with a party of Reserve Police and began arresting them.

About a hundred of them, men and women, were thus arrested and taken to the Police Station with their baskets and carts. The kisans, however, refused to carry the baskets and the carts, so the landlords had to drag the carts themselves amidst shouts from the kisan urchins: “New kinds of bulls have come to Watrap!”

The kisans refused to take this police zoolum lying down. About 2000 of them marched to the Police Station with the slogan: “Either arrest all of us or release the arrested peasants.” The Circle Inspector was forced to release all.

Later on, however, 20 kisans were again put under arrest. They were asked by the Sub-Magistrate to give an undertaking that they would not enter the fields if they wanted release on bail. The kisans, of course, refused.

In the end the strength of the entire kisan masses of the locality forced their unconditional release on bail.

Last Trick Fails

The bureaucrats tried a last trick to divide the kisans from the Kisan Sabha and approach individual kisan elders. They were firmly told by the kisans, one and all: "No negotiations except through our Sabha." The Assistant DSP ended his "peace efforts" by telling the kisans that the landlords were not willing for a settlement.

And now, the police bosses are busy cooking up their next steps in consultation with the landlords. The Circle Inspector held a Conference with the landlords and the talk is going round that false cases are going to be foisted on the Kisan Sabha leaders.

Local Congressmen have formed a "Conciliation Committee" consisting of Congressmen and landlords. Not a single representative of the Kisan Sabha has been included in this Committee! The only work that the members of this "Conciliation Committee" have so far done is to recruit blacklegs for landlords!

The kisans, however, are standing solidly behind their Kisan Sabha under the Red flag and are determined to fight back landlord oppression and police terror. They are determined not to let 10,000 acres of precious land go fallow.

The Prakasam Ministry has to decide whom it is with in this struggle—with the 3000 poor kisan families fighting for their bare right to live, or with handful of landlord-parasites who want to starve them and starve the people.

4. Communist Activities in Ramnad

Memorandum submitted on behalf of the Landowners' Association, Watrap, Ramnad, to the Prime Minister, Government of Madras; Madras, 7 October 1946. File No. 2742, *Public*(General) Department, Government of Madras (1946); Tamil Nadu State Archives.

*Camp Madras,
7 October 1946.*

Honoured Sir,

The above Association [Landowners' Association, Watrap, Ramnad] begs to represent the following facts for your earnest consideration and necessary immediate action.

1. By mischievous and false propaganda that the land belongs only to the cultivators and by looting away a good portion of the landlords' share of paddy produce during the harvest season at the beginning of this year and thereby securing a good fund which enabled them to hold the Madras Provincial Communist Party Conference at Watrap in June 1946, and by inflammatory [inflammatory] speeches made during the Conference and after, the innocent labourers and tenants have been misled and made to believe that the Government was going to pass legislation even in ryotwari areas, that the person now cultivating the land would get proprietary rights, that they should therefore take forcible possession of the lands and continue in possession of the same till the legislation is passed and that if they did so they would get proprietary rights in such lands. This has led to acts of violence, criminal intimidation and land trespass on a mass scale and other unruly acts. The indifference of the Police authorities for a considerable time was also a contributing factor for all the troubles. It was only after the Reserve Police was stationed at Watrap that the violent activities of the Communist Party were

checked to some extent. But for it, the situation would have grown worse and there would have been acts of vandalism on a large scale.

2. Watrap is a fertile revenue firka in Ramnad District, consisting of five villages viz. Kansapuram, Watrap, Pudupatti, Maharajapuram and Sundarapandium, having a population of about 40,000 and with an acreage of 7000 acres of wet lands and 16,000 acres of dry lands, some of which are near the hills, yielding about 100,000 bags of paddy and 32,000 bags of millet, ragi, etc.

3. The landowners of the firka are only petty peasant-proprietors. There is not even one who owns a hundred acres. A very few own more than 20 acres. The landowners are about 2500. Most of them only very small extents ranging upto 5 acres. 90 per cent of them could cultivate the lands themselves. More than 60 per cent of them were cultivating the lands till some years ago and even now about 20 per cent of the landowners are cultivating their lands themselves. As there is keen competition for the cultivation of the lands on account of the fact of overpopulation in the firka and want of any industrial or other pursuits, the landowners who could cultivate and who were cultivating till some years ago, allowed their lands to be taken on lease or contract by some labourers who assumed the role of tenants or as middlemen for tenants. The following systems of cultivation are prevalent now.

(1) Pannai or self-cultivation.

(2) Contract basis fixed for each year; the tenants may be varied and the lands may be varied.

(3) Waram basis: Generally the sharing is in the ratio of 2 for the owner and 1 for the cultivator. The cultivator should bear all the costs. Most of the lands are good lands. For inferior lands which are not many, the waram ranges up to half and half.

4. The cultivators have wet cultivation work only for about a month and thereafter they have only supervising work for three months, which they do at their own leisure without detriment to their other avocations. Their earnings for this short period are considerable. A good portion of their expenses is covered by the straw which they almost take in entirely. Though the crops may yield less on account of dearth of water supply till the last, the straw is a certain yield. If any one of the cultivators is in needy circumstances, it is not on account of want of sufficient income in cultivation but on account of want of other work.

5. The Communist Party demanded 50 per cent of the paddy yield during the past season against the terms of contract. With a view to avoid trouble and have a peaceful relationship with the cultivators, the landowners showed concern as suggested by the Circle Inspector of Police and agreed to receive 3/5 share instead of 2/3. Though the cultivators were satisfied, the Communist Party were not and they induced a number of cultivators to take away clandestinely or forcibly a considerable portion of the produce generally and the entire in a few cases.

6. The Communist Party got their share of such looted paddy and accumulated funds for their expenses. They organised and prevented cultivation of the last summer crop on a considerable extent of land.

7. The Communist Party organised boycott of all kinds but they did not succeed. Their intimidation had not the necessary effect with some.

8. The landowners have now arranged to lease out their lands on contract basis or to cultivate them themselves. Some lands have been taken on contract by a number of honest and good tenants. The rest, excepting the lands which the owners intend cultivating are available for cultivation. But the Communist Party that has secured the active support of the Goonda

elements, are intimidating those cultivators and labourers who do work for such cultivators and for such landowners, who cultivate themselves.

9. The Communist Party are now openly inciting people to do acts of violence. They call the honest cultivators as blacklegs and threaten them with loss of life, limb and property and damage to their crops. The acts of intimidation are too numerous and the police authorities have been apprised of the same. There was trespass on a mass scale also. About 30 cases have been charge-sheeted by the police. There has been conviction in one case and the rest are pending trial. The ingenious defence set up by the Communist Leaders is that the cultivators were permitted by the landowners to cultivate.

10. The leaders of the Communist Party have even threatened that the bunds of tanks would be cut open, that the seedlings and crops would be destroyed and that the landowners and cultivators would have to incur a heavy loss, if a settlement as dictated by them, is not accepted. In spite of such threats, some tenants who do not belong to the Communist Party have agreed to cultivate. With a view to create terror in the minds of the cultivators, the Communist Party, with the help of Goondas set up by them, have taken away the green manure—kolingi—in the Alankulam tank to the detriment of the ryots under that ayacut.

11. There are sufficient number of instances of criminal intimidation, trespass, violent speeches and actual acts of violence to enable the police authorities to take action against some of the leaders of the Communist Party under Section 107 CrPC. But still no action is taken by the police, though they have been repeatedly requested to do so. Unless action is taken immediately against the persons mentioned hereunder, the rowdy elements of the Communist Party will be set up by them and they are likely to carry out their threats and cause enormous loss of property and paddy crop and serious breach of peace is likely to take place.

The Association, therefore, prays that instructions be given to the District Superintendent of Police, Ramnad, to take immediate action against the persons mentioned hereunder under Section 107 and 151 CrPC: (1) S. Alagirisami Naidu (2) S. A. Arunachala Thevar (3) V. Karuppana Thevar (4) S. Kuppusami Naidu.

V. Rajagopalingar.
Vakil, Madura.

Representative of the Landholders' Association, Watrap.

5. Agrarian Troubles in Watrap

Letter by A. Srinivasachariar, a pleader from Watrap, Ramnad, to S.V. Ramamurthy, Chief Secretary, Government of Madras; Srivilliputtur, 8 October 1946. File No. 2472; Public (General) Department, Government of Madras (1946); Tamil Nadu State Archives.

*Srivilliputtur,
8-10-1946.*

Sir,

I congratulate you and India as a whole on your selection for an important special post in the delegation to Washington at this critical period when genius like you should lead this country and the world and shape the destinies of India.

May I renew my previous request to you regarding my own village Watrap and agrarian troubles there. I got a reply from you through your under-secretary acknowledging my letter of 7th August. A deputation has been sent from Watrap which would have met the Premier by this time and representations should have been made to him also.

The local District Magistrate and the District Superintendent are blaming us (Brahmin landlords) though we have consented to lowest terms of fixed quantity of leases. But they are asking us to consent for warram tenure, as dictated to by Communist kisans. We have got already about 180 lease deeds for fixed quantities of leases, but our lessees fear to enter into the lands for agricultural operations as they are threatened with molestations, caste ex-communications and caste-fines at the instigation of Communist kisans.

Before you hand over charge, would you kindly remember me and Watrap and write a note or DO [demi-official letter] to the District Magistrate and the DSP, if necessary in consultation with the Premier to give us protection without delay. The Minister for Agriculture, Sri P.S. Kumarasami Raja was here on the 16th September and I met him and he told me that he would also intimate the Premier if deputation waits. As you are the delegate specially selected now to join the delegation to Washington for World food question, you will surely help now this tiny village, a corner of India, as your services here have been memorable. I have great pleasure in writing this request to you as I know you from 1914 or so.

Pray excuse me for this letter which is impelled by our large village interest involving about 10,000 acres of wet lands.

Wishing you happy voyage and healthy return with all success,

Yours very sincerely,
A. Srinivasachariar.
8 10-46.

6. Tanjore Ryots Claim Larger Share of Harvest

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Madras Province for the first half of November 1946. Public (General) Department, Government of Madras (1946); Tamil Nadu State Archives.

Political

Communist agitators have again been busy in the deltaic tracts of the Tanjore District. At the time of sharing the paddy between the mirasdar and the cultivating ryot they were have been inciting the ryots to claim a larger share and also the payment of bonus. The police have had to visit several villages to prevent breaches of the peace. The Communists have also been stirring up a great deal of unrest in the Hosdrug Sub Taluk of South Kanara District. Here the main objectionable activities have been directed against the grain procurement policy of the Government.

Miscellaneous

There has been persistent agitation in the Northern Circars for the abolition of the zamindari system. The Communists are naturally in the forefront of this agitation and have been inciting ryots to occupy zamindari lands forcibly.

7. Watrap Landowners and Tenants Effect Compromise

Report by Deputy Superintendent of Police, Ramnad, to the Inspector General of Police, Madras; 24 December 1946. File No. 2472; Public (General) Department, Government of Madras (1946); Tamil Nadu State Archives.

Ramnad.
23 December 1946.

Sir,

A compromise was effected between the landlords and the tenants on the following conditions:

1. Agreement valid upto 30-6-47 but any standing crop on 30-6-47 not to be removed by the lessee. Lands to be classified into three categories with the consent of both parties and leased out on the following contract basis:

- (a) First category—8 bags of 60 measures per acre.
- (b) Second category—7 bags of 60 measures per acre.
- (c) Third category—6 bags of 60 measures per acre.

The paddy to be measured in the thrashing floor.

2. Tenants should bear cultivation charges and the landowners should pay the Government Kist.

3. In case of failure of crops, baling charges and produce from lands for which Government sanction remission of tax to be divided equally.

4. Cultivation charges and the produce to be shared equally if second crops are raised.

5. Kanmoi charges to be borne by the tenant for the first crop and for the second crop, charges to be equally divided.

6. The tenant should apply manure worth Rs 20 and Rs 15 for the first and second crops respectively.

7. The tenant should give 3 bundles of hay in the first crop and 1½ bundles in the second crop per acre.

8. Cultivation to be started only after executing the lease deed.

Cultivation was started in right earnest and there was no trouble. But four of the landlords of Anuppankulam village about 3 miles from Watrap permitted a new set of tenants to cultivate their lands after the compromise. Hence, on 14-12-46 the old tenants, who were thrown out of employment, got annoyed and trespassed into the lands with their supporters. Cr. Nos. 186 to 189/46, Secs. 440 and 427 IPC were registered and investigated into. On 15-12-46, three more similar complaints were received about destruction of seedlings in Periakulan tank area west of Watrap Cr Nos 190 to 12/46 were registered and investigated. On receipt of this information, I proceeded to Watrap and enquired into the matter. On the whole, seedlings that could be transplanted in about 64 cents [?] were damaged and the damage has been negligible. These villages were raided by the Police and out of 25 accused 16 (and not 17 as reported in my wireless message) surrendered before the Police, and they were remanded. On 17-12-46, the tenants of Malapaayam village approached the landlords, apologised for their action and gave an undertaking that such offences would not be repeated.

The situation is well under control and the Reserve party continues to stay in the village.

M.D. Ebenezer.
Dt Supdt of Police, Ramnad.

8. Chirakkal (Malabar) Kisans Prevent Removal of Paddy

Article, 'Malabar Special Police to aid landlords'. *People's Age*, 29 December 1946.

An Associated Press of India message from Madras, dated December 22, says that the Malabar Special Police (MSP) killed two and injured five in firing against a "Communist mob".

The place of the incident is Karivelloor, a village in Chirakkal taluk, Malabar, and the reason is that the people of the village, under Kisan Sabha leadership, prevented an absolute landlord from taking paddy out of the village.

Now Karivelloor is a deficit village; it has to import over 60 per cent of its food from outside. A good part of the land in the village is owned by a landlord who lives about 20 miles away. It is his usual practice to collect his rent (in kind) in this village, transport it to his home all the way, use it and sell it.

This year, because of acute famine conditions (rice ration was reduced last year from 10 oz. to 8 oz. and was threatened to be further reduced to 6 oz.) the people under Kisan Sabha leadership, asked the landlord to take rent in cash and allow the whole local produce to be used locally.

Kisans Prevent Removal of Paddy

When the landlord refused to do so, the people prevented its removal. At this, the obliging bureaucracy sent its most ruthless police (the MSP) to the aid of the landlord.

This, however, is only the most naked act of the MSP. For, the same repression (short of firing) is taking place all over Chirakkal taluk and parts of Kasargod, Kottayam and Kurumbranad taluks. The MSP has been posted in eight centres in Chirakkal taluk.

They are regularly going into villages, raiding houses, arresting and beating up men, women and children. Cases have also occurred of the MSP looting shops, and destroying property.

Details of all these have been published in *Deshabhimani*, the Malayalam daily of the Communist Party.

Why is it that all this is allowed? Because the kisans tell the landlords: "Do not take your rent in kind. We will pay your rent in cash at the control rate." The landlord does not allow it: he wants it in kind or in cash at rates 50 per cent higher than the control rate.

Kisans refuse this unreasonable demand and hand over the paddy to the Government and not to the landlord. And then comes the bureaucrat with his MSP and tells the kisans: "You are legally bound to pay rent in kind. If you refuse to do that, we will use force."

While thus forcing kisans to pay rent in kind to landlords who are thereby allowed to fill their granaries, the bureaucrat does not allow the kisan to keep his own ration out of what he produces. The whole produce minus seed is to be handed over to the landlord as rent and only if there is anything left after that can he keep his ration—this is "Monopoly Procurement!"

The result is that when landlords have thousands of maunds of paddy in their granaries (most of which they sell in the black market), the kisans who produce paddy have to buy rice.

The damage done by this to procurement may be gauged from the official figures of production and procurement in Malabar.

	Tons of rice
Total Gross Production:	3,60,000
Seed:	24,000
Consumption by land-holding classes:	1,17,000
Actual Procurement (1945-46):	56,000

That is, while the total surplus procurable (gross produce, minus seed and consumption by landholding classes) must be no less than 1,70,000 tons, the quantity actually procured is only 56,000 tons, i.e., 1/3rd of the available surplus.

Save Paddy from Landlords' Granaries

The Kisan Sabha said that this unjust and corrupt procurement should be replaced by a system under which:

Kisans will be allowed to keep seed, cultivation expenses (that part of it which is made in kind) and their own family ration till next harvest.

They will be asked to hand over the whole surplus (gross produce minus the above) to the Government.

Landlords will be forced to receive rent in cash at control rates and not in kind or in cash at higher rates.

The adoption of this would mean that, while kisans will get their own food from what they themselves produce, the whole quantity of paddy that goes into the landlords' granaries will go into the hands of the Government.

Instead of adopting this reasonable proposal of the Kisan Sabha, the Congress Government is allowing the bureaucrats to run wild against kisans, beating and killing them and allowing landlords to fill their granaries and sell in the black market.

9. Communist Activities in Malabar and Tanjore

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Madras Province for the second half of December 1946. Fortnightly Reports; Public (General) Department, Government of Madras (1946); Tamil Nadu State Archives.

Political

Communist activities have become increasingly violent in Malabar and Tanjore Districts. Recent events in Malabar—more particularly described below under 'Law and Order'—show that Communists have embarked on a policy of willful defiance of authority. In Tanjore district the recent agreement between the Mirasidars and Kisans has been followed by fresh trouble of a serious nature. Following a clash between Kisans and the servants of a Mirasidar, two of the latter were murdered and this has necessitated the banning of all Kisan and Communist meetings in the Mannargudi division of the district. In East Godavari district the Communists are inciting agricultural labourers to take forcible possession of waste and poramboke lands, and in Guntur district they are busy ing themselves in the formation of Agricultural Cooly and Handloom Weavers' Associations.

Law and Order

There were two serious incidents in Malabar. On December 20th in North Malabar district, a band of Communists armed with lathies and slings obstructed the movement of a landholder's

paddy. The police force which was on duty to prevent obstruction was attacked and was compelled to open fire. Two Communists were killed and others injured. Members of the Police party were also injured mostly by sling shots. In the other incident Communists entrenched themselves on the top of a hill and started attacking a party of Malabar Special Police with country guns and other instruments. The Police were again compelled to open fire killing five.

3.B.iv Bombay Province

1. Discontent Among Warlis of Thana

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Bombay Province for the second half of September 1946. File No. 18/9/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Communist Activities

The Communists are again active this year in the Northern part of the Thana District carrying on propaganda against the landlords. As a result of their activities, discontent is spreading among Warlis employed in grass-cutting and relations between the landlords and labourers are being strained. Two assaults on agents of landlords by Warlis took place in August last and now about 300 Warlis have struck work demanding that their wages may be doubled. It is also reported that the Communists are sponsoring a move to transfer labour to Palghar in order to bring pressure to bear on the landlords in Umbergaon and Dahanu talukas.

2. Warli Militancy

Article, '15,000 Warli kisans on strike'. *People's Age*, 27 October 1946.

A year ago, in October 1945, a lakh and a half Warli (aboriginal) peasants of Dahanu and Umbergaon Talukas of Maharashtra fought the biggest strike battle against their saukars' 'time honoured' practice of forced labour. Despite police-firing and terror, despite externment of their leaders, the peasants for the first time awakened to consciousness under the Kisan Sabha's Red Flag, fought and won.

Today 15,000 of them have once again entered the arena against their saukars and contractors, this time on the issue of wage increase for timber-cutting.

The jungles of Dahanu and Umbergaon export huge quantities of timber. War prices have made this one of the most profitable trades. And yet, the Warli timber-cutters, who have to work in the jungles away from their homes, are paid a 'liberal' daily wage of twelve annas or, at a few places, fourteen annas.

A New Warli Today

But since last year, a new Warli has come into being. This September as soon as the work began, he demanded a uniform daily wage of Rs 1-4. The saukars and contractors refused to accept their demand, and immediately the fifteen thousand Warlis came out on strike under the Red Flag. Even where work had already begun, the Warlis left their jobs and went back to their villages.

The saukars, many of them local Congress 'leaders', now rushed to the District Collector. They even wired, it is reported, to Pandit Nehru and Premier Kher asking them to "control the Communists". Perhaps they wanted Amalner to be repeated.

What did they do to settle the dispute? Leaders of Premier Kher's Adivasi (Aboriginal) Seva Mandal are openly supporting the saukars. Two months ago when the Kisan Sabha leaders tried to arrange a joint discussion between the saukars, the District Collector and the Kisan Sabha to settle the issue of wages for hay-cutting and timber-cutting, some Provincial leaders of the Congress torpedoed the move on the ground that it "would give recognition to the Communists".

Kisan Leaders Called

But now that the Warlis had actually gone on strike, the Collector was compelled to call in for consultation the Kisan Sabha leaders, Mrs Godavari Parulekar and Ramakant Gupte. The latter firmly reiterated the Warlis' demand and also struck a note of warning.

Last year's agreement between the saukars and the Kisan Sabha fixed the rates for hay-cutting (Rs 2-8 for cutting a bale of hay in Dahanu and Umbergaon Talukas, Rs 3 per bale in Palghar Taluka).

This agreement was not being honoured by the saukars. Continued failure to implement this agreement, the Kisan Sabha leaders warned, would lead to a general strike of all Warlis in all the three Talukas.

While these talks were going on, the saukars were, of course, not sitting idle. October 10 (the date when firing took place last year) was fast approaching. Rumours were again set afloat about the 'violent intentions' of the Warlis.

Armed Police in Action

On September 28 and 29, armed Police were rushed to Bhilad, a central place. That night at Dhanoli, a little distance away, some shots were fired, accompanied by floodlights from electric torches coming from the house of Ardesir, the local saukar. As a result some Warlis rushed away to the jungles to escape the saukars' repression.

Today about one hundred armed policemen have been brought to this area. And each of the particularly notorious saukars have [has] a few of these [them] posted on his estate. The Deputy Superintendent of Police has also established his temporary headquarters at Dahanu.

Goondas Let Loose

Simultaneously, the saukars' goondas are openly beating up Warli men and even women with the police lending a helping hand. This has happened at Borigaon, Untalwad, etc. At Untalwad, a Warli was kept in the lockup for the whole night.

Some saukars are freely talking about "externment of the Communists" and even of promulgation of Section 144 in the area.

Against all these tactics the Warlis are fighting without rest.

At some places, the saukars literally forced their Warlis to work at reduced wages keeping them as virtual prisoners. With the strike on, the simple weapon the Warlis used was that hundreds of them would march to these places and 'release' their colleagues by taking them away from their 'prison'.

At Kainad the saukars had resorted to this horror trick. Two thousand Warlis from neighbouring villages marched and stopped the timber-cutting. The 'captive' Warlis were only waiting for this help and together they marched away—the released 'captives' and the 'liberators'.

But the saukar was wild with rage. At once he sent telegrams to Premier Kher and the DSP charging the Warlis with "hooliganism". Promptly policemen were rushed to his aid, but despite all their efforts they could find no trace of any trouble and had to come back empty-handed.

No Forced Timber-cutting

At Shisna, four thousand Warlis took out a morcha and put an end to the forced timber-cutting. The Mukadam with his goondas were just helpless. Before the Warlis went back, the only punishment they awarded the Mukadam was to make him do 100 *baithaks* [sit-ups], "just to give him an idea of what it means to do forced labour."

These saukars have another outrageous and barbaric practice. In return for two or three hundred rupees borrowed for marriage expenses, the Warlis have to slave for life on the saukar's land or household. Against this system, the Warlis have battled for long. But at many places the practice is still continuing.

This year, the Warlis of Borlai liberated 40 such 'marriage slaves' belonging to the notorious local Marwari, Jugal Kishore. They also stopped the saukar of Tumkh village from employing Warlis daily on forced labour to get his milk from a place 12 miles away.

'Marriage Slaves' Freed

On August 6, at Vasa, 1000 Warlis held a meeting in front of Behram Saukar's house. He also had 'marriage slaves'. The coward threatened them with shooting if they stepped in. But the Warlis were not to be cowed down. They met a Warli cart-driver who was himself a 'marriage slave', freed him and with him they marched into the guarded precincts of Behram's estate.

They liberated all the 'marriage slaves' there and came out amidst deafening shouts of "Lal Bawta Ki Jai". Where was Behram with his gun? As he saw this mighty force rushing through, he had swiftly taken to his heels through the back door.

At Sankas, Saukar Homi Deviyerwala is also an Hon. Magistrate. And yet no one in the neighbourhood sets the law more easily at naught than he in employing 'marriage slaves'. When the Warlis went to his house to liberate their colleagues, the armed police ready to protect him levelled their guns and started abusing the 'liberators'.

Police on the Run

The peasants wanted to do their job peacefully. They turned back. The armed police thought they had frightened the Warlis away and they began to follow them. But when the Warlis, a mile away from Homi's house, turned back to see the police on their track to a man they got ready to face these cowards.

The very sight of these infuriated peasants put the fear of God into the hearts of the armed police. With their rifles under their arms, they rushed back faster than they had come. Close on their heels rushed the 5000 Warlis; on and on, right into Homi's compound.

Here, the police, who only a few minutes before had levelled their guns on the unarmed Warlis, now implored them "not to tell anyone that we gave you a chase with our guns". But the Warlis did not care to reply to this whining. They had gone there to release Homi's 'marriage slaves'. They released them all and marched out.

That is Warli under the Kisan Sabha.

3. Warlis Win Their Terms

Article, 'Warli kisans' glorious victory'. *People's Age*, 24 November 1946.

Fifteen thousand Warli (aboriginal) peasants of Dahanu and Umbergaon Talukas have won one of the most resounding victories in the kisan struggle of Maharashtra.

During this month-old strike, yes, strike of peasants, every weapon of repression and suppression was let loose upon them—mass arrests, threats of importing blacklegs and even of firing by the Saukars and the police, refusal to let prisoners out on bail, forged documents to trick them into work, etc. Every weapon they blunted.

'Todi' (timber-cutting) is a very lucrative trade for the Saukars of this area. Not only the wartime prices of timber, but also the ridiculously low wages—lower than what the Government have fixed—add to their enormous profits.

The extent of their investment can be gauged from the fact that the tenders for the 'Todi' have this year reached a figure in the vicinity of a crore and a half rupees.

This year, however, 'Todi' ceased to be a paradise for these Saukars. The Kisan Sabha demanded a living wage and compensation for injuries during the work. (Annually 'Todi' claims about 6 or 7 Warlis as victims and it has never been the Saukars' practice to pay any compensation to the families of the dead).

Naturally the Saukars refused to concede such 'shocking' terms and equally naturally, the Warlis of the Kisan Sabha came out on strike.

Strike Message

It was a battle that would do credit to any organisation. Unorganised till hardly a year ago, the Warlis showed astounding organisation.

The message of strike spread like lightning throughout the jungle-area. And thousands of Warlis left their jobs and returned home.

Where the message had not reached and 'Todi' was kept on Warlis strikers would march in thousands and peacefully bring away their colleagues. This happened at Kainad, Shisna, etc. (See *People's Age*, October 27).

The Saukars were in jitters. They had invested in tenders a sum of about Rs 35 lakhs (being one-fourth the total amount for the tender). And unless the strike ended or was broken in time, the 'Todi' could not be over by March, the scheduled date for clearing the forest, and Rs 35 lakhs would be forfeited.

The Saukars at first tried terror. Help was summoned from the District Magistrate. Telegrams were rushed to Premier Kher and Pandit Nehru asking for "intervention" and "control over the Communists". But nothing could end the strike.

The Warlis had also stopped plying the Saukars' hay-carts.

Now the Saukars tried the second round of tricks. They knew that the Warlis would honour any order the Kisan Sabha would issue. And after all, the illiterate, ignorant Warlis could not differentiate one 'permit' from the other. Then why not forge a Kisan Sabha 'permit' ordering the Warlis to do the work.

Forgery Foiled

But the Warlis were more than a match for these tricks. When a Saukar showed them such a permit, they just spat on it.

'Trying to cheat us," they yelled, "this can never be the permit of our Lal Bawta. Where is our Sickle and Hammer on it. Bai (Godavari Parulekar) has taught us to look out for that on every thing."

And the Saukars were dumbfounded.

When all this could not break the strike, some volunteers of the Thana Rashtriya Seva Dal offered to help out the Saukars. In groups they went into some villages to abuse the Red flag and ask the Warlis to go back to work.

But so hot a reception did they receive from the Warlis that they hurried back faster than they went in. At some villages, the Warlis even refused them room inside their huts to cook their food.

Last Trick

Driven to desperation, the Saukars tried the last trick.

Last year just during October and Saukars had got the Warlis gathered at one place, Talawade, under the false pretext that their Bai was in danger. Simultaneously they had the police ordered there to 'control' the Warlis. The police had opened fire and murdered five Warlis. That was to crush the strike then taking place to fix up the wages of harvesting and hay-cutting.

The Saukars had escaped, body and soul. So this year they wanted to repeat the performance.

The plan seemed likely to succeed, for the same police officer (the Deputy Superintendent) who had last year's firing to his credit, was on duty this year also.

To start with, the Saukars spread false rumours, abused the Warlis, did everything to provoke them. On the other hand, they wired to Premier Kher and the Collector of the District to rush armed police. And yet they could not provoke the Warlis.

But soon they got their chance.

On October 30, Nerkar, a Saukar from this area abused the Warlis. When the latter stood up against it, he charged two of them with stealing fifty rupees from him. Next day a police party raided their houses at Ritali. Of course nothing was found.

But when the search was going on, Nerkar's brother quietly shoved in Rs 50 at the door of the hut, and as the police came out they were shown the 'proof'.

But many Warlis had seen the culprit in the act—and they vigorously resisted this implication.

Promptly the Saukars rushed an S.O.S. to the DSP at Dahanu. Keen on repeating history, they also spread the rumour that Bai was going to Ritali that night (she was at Kalyan, miles away) and that they should all gather there.

Obedient to the call of the Saukars the DSP rushed that night (October 31) with armed police to Ritali. The Resident Magistrate accompanied him.

But unfortunately for them all, the Kisan Sabha leaders had come to know of it in time. They sent messages everywhere, blowing up the rumour, and the conspiracy was smashed before it was launched.

Police Zulum

Of course, no Warli from anywhere gathered at Ritali. But still the police committed excesses. At 4 a.m., Warlis of Ritali were dragged out of their huts, men and women. Even old women were not spared.

55 Warlis were arrested. Indeed any Warli who came in the orbit of the DSP's electric torch was picked up.

What was more significant was that at least three notorious Saukars of the area were accompanying the DSP throughout his operations.

But the Warlis were not cowed down. That evening as they were being marched through the streets of Dahanu, the Saukars came out of their houses to express their jubilation. But their very sight drew such a thunderous shout of "Lal Bawta ki Jai" from the arrested Warlis, that they hurriedly retreated into their dens.

Against all these tactics, the Warlis battled on. Such was their unity that not a Warli could be got to break the strike.

Saukars Collapse

As days passed and even a month was over, the Saukars were in a blue funk. Rs 35 lakhs were at stake and that was too much to be indifferent about. Moreover the Warlis showed absolutely no sign of weakening.

And so the inevitable came to pass. With the intervention of the Government Welfare Officer, the Saukars signed an agreement with the representatives of the Kisan Sabha.

- * For felling tree of different girths the Kisan Sabha fixed different rates, and these were accepted.
- * The principle of paying compensation for injuries sustained during work was accepted.
- * Above all, they agreed to give bonus to all Warlis who had put in two months work.
- * An additional daily wage of Re 1 was fixed for polishing and other jobs, which were previously done without any payment.
- * The Welfare Officer agreed to intervene about the withdrawal of cases against the Warlis.

And should any violation of the agreement be made, it was decided that the Kisan Sabha would not be bound to honour it.

Like beaten dogs, the Saukars have accepted all these terms and promised to behave like human beings in their relations with the Warlis.

Maharashtra's biggest kisan battle has been won under the Red flag.

4. Emergency Declared in Warli Areas

Extracts from an article, 'Police whip cracks again over Warli kisans'. *People's Age*, 8 December 1946.

On November 20, barely ten days after the Bombay Government's Special Officer had settled the strike of 15,000 Warli kisans for higher wages for timber-cutting and promised to see an end to all repression against them, the Thana District authorities, using the 'Goonda' Act, externed four Kisan Sabha leaders from their district.

On December 1 two more leaders were externed, one of them a woman leader!

And that is not all. 250 policemen and 25 Sub-Inspectors have since then been patrolling this area: Dahanu-Umbergaon Talukas. Behind an 'iron curtain' mass arrests (about 50) of Warlis, attempts to force them to work, threats to shoot, etc., are being freely made. And all this under the 'Goonda' Act.

The Warlis have hit out against this treachery by bringing the saukars' work of timber-cutting and harvesting completely to a standstill.

15,000 Warlis of this area had recently fought and won a great strike against the local Saukars, for better wages for timber-cutting. (See *People's Age*, November 24). As this month-old strike could not be broken either by repression or treachery, the Government's Special Prant Officer felt it necessary to intervene.

On November 10, he made the Saukars concede the just demands of the Warlis and the strike was withdrawn.

State of Emergency

As a part of this agreement, the Prant Officer had agreed to see that all repression would be stopped.

But within four days of signing this agreement and the amicable end of this remarkably peaceful strike, the Government, without the least excuse, suddenly declared a state of emergency in these Talukas.

3.B.v Bihar

1. Peasants Forcibly Take Possession of Land in Patna Division

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Bihar for the second half of July 1946. File No. 18/7/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Kisan Sabha

During the past few weeks there has been agrarian trouble, particularly in the Patna Division where, in the number of places, tenants have tried to obtain forcible possession of the landlords' *bakasht* lands. In one place in the Shahabad district riots occurred and the District Officers are apprehensive that this particular form of agitation is likely to spread in the near future.

2. Tussle Over *Bakasht* Lands in Bihar

Article, 'Bihar kisans in revolt'. *People's Age*, 6 October 1946.

All over Bihar and in particular in Monghyr, Gaya and Shahabad, the kisans are in revolt, claiming back their ancestral lands, wrongfully plundered from them by looter landlords. There was twenty lakh acres of such stolen land in Bihar. The kisans, the rightful owners, continued to occupy and till the land but on a contract or crop-sharing basis.

The Tenancy Law provides for the return of such stolen land (known as *Bakasht*) to the kisan, provided he can prove continued occupancy. But of course, in practice, this seldom happens, for the landlords make certain of the destruction of all documentary evidence proving such occupancy.

During the last three months, Bihar's kisans have started reasserting their rights to the *Bakasht* land. In this short period, they have won back over four thousand acres of *Bakasht*.

Bihar's landlords, led by the Maharaja of Darbhanga and Sir C.P.N. Singh, are up in arms against all proposals to abolish zamindari, and are making plans to perpetuate their exploitation. To back up all measures to abolish zamindari, the kisans have launched a counter-offensive against the intrigues of the landlords.

MONGHYR IN THE LEAD

In South Monghyr (the constituency which Premier Sri Krishna Sinha represents) *Bakasht* actions were fought in the three villages of Mahirat, Jangalbigha and Deura—and the kisans won back their rightful claim to 150 bighas of land.

But the Premier ordered that all land, which was being tilled by the landlords themselves should be returned to them. And, of course, with the aid of forged documents, the landlords were able to get back 65 bighas of the land they had plundered.

Elephant and All

In village Baruna, the kisans fought under the leadership of the Communist kisan workers Ramdhari and Prakash Anandpuri. Here they planted the Red flag on 90 bighas of *Bakasht* land. The landlord collected a host of goonda toughs and sent the village patwari with them to take possession of the land.

But the whole gang took to their heels as soon as they saw the kisans marching towards them. The patwari was forced to hide in a 'khatoli' (improvised planquin) in which he could be carried home.

The kisans sowed their paddy.

The next day the landlord's manager came to 'investigate', riding on an elephant. He caught a glimpse of the Red flag and saw that his 'tenants' meant business. He scampered off—elephant and all!

"The Land is Ours"

In village Bhadaili when the local landlord found that all his terrorism would not make the kisans give up their land, he struck on a new device. One of his toughs was made to 'disappear' and the ever-obliging police arrested all the leading kisans of the village in connection with his 'disappearance'.

Quickly the landlord sent his men to the fields to till the land in the absence of the kisans in jail. The wretch miscalculated. His toughs were met by a resolute band of all the village women and the few men who had not been arrested and were literally chased away.

"The land is ours—we shall till it," said the kisans and began to sow maize in the fields.

On August 25, when the crop was ready the landlord sent a force of lathials to harvest it. But the kisans had their own plan. Five hundred of them gathered with Red flags. From the neighbouring villages, a steady stream of reinforcements rushed in. The women tied their saris in martial style, ready for the fight, should it come.

The harvesting began. In three hours the whole harvest, standing on 20 bighas of land had been gathered in, and stocked safely in the kisans' homes.

The landlords' goondas did not dare to come near the field.

GAYA'S LANDLORD MURDERERS

In Gaya, the kisan upsurge is a direct outcome of the terrible repression launched by the landlords.

Rashtravani (Patna Congress daily) in its issue of July 4 reported that in Majra (Aurangabad Sub-division) armed goondas employed by the landlords attacked and injured severely a dozen kisans.

In village Amavan (Thana Rajauh) the landlord's goondas attacked and killed one kisan and severely wounded 25 others.

In village Kurvihar (Thana Wazirganj) the leading kisans, Brijeshwar Singh was murdered near the landlord's *kutchery*.

Women's Lal Fauj

Fighting back for their very existence the kisans have recovered two thousand bighas of *Bakasht* in five thanas of the district.

The biggest struggle that has so far been fought is in village Sindhari (Nawada Sub-Division). The struggle here was led by the well-known Congress kisan leader Pandit Yadunandan Sharma. There are about 60 families in this village, and together united they won back 300 to 350 bighas of *Bakasht* land.

The young girls of the village formed a Lal Fauj (Red Volunteer Corps) of their own. They donned red shirts and shorts and began daily military exercise. Bhumihar women broke through their purdah and came out in the open for the battle.

Sindhari was really in revolt. The *Bakasht* was back with its rightful owners.

Vacillating Leaders

Unfortunately, however, some of the leaders of these militant kisans hesitated and delayed. Pandit Yadunandan Sharma himself was afraid of disciplinary action by the Congress and was constantly wavering. When he was accused by the Provincial Congress Committee of starting the whole 'trouble', he categorically denied having a hand in the whole affair.

And thus when the struggle was at its highest pitch Swami Sahajanand Saraswati, the Congress kisan leader, sent a petition to the Deputy Commissioner to intervene. The Deputy Commissioner was accepted as arbitrator, the struggle called off.

Of course, the bureaucrat's award was heavily weighted in favour of the landlords. The kisans rejected it outright and got ready for a new round of struggle—this time without any leaders who may get cold feet.

SHAHABAD'S BATTLE FOR *BAKASHT*

In Shahabad, the battle for *Bakasht* started in the Bhabua Sub-division, Tamarhi, Anarth, Baghni, Kirkalla, Mahuar and half a dozen other villages were the storm centres.

The landlords reinforced their private armies with lathials hired from the neighbouring districts of Mirzapur and Ballia.

On July 11, Musafir Singh a veteran kisan worker of village Baghni, was murdered.

On the same day, Ram Surat Singh, landlord of Tamarhi, along with a gang of his criminal associates armed with guns, spears and lathis, attacked a group of kisans while they were tilling their fields. A kisan named Shivanath Pasi was shot dead, and several others were seriously injured.

When the police came, the landlord and his gang disappeared. The police arrested a few of the landlord's men and at the same time several kisans.

Indignant at the murders and the arrests, the kisans all over the Bhabua Sub-division and in the neighbouring Sub-division of Buxer rose in protest.

"Socialist Experiment"

In one village, Rajapur, the kisans and landless labourers divided the land in the village equally among themselves, till the police nipped in the bud what the *Amrita Bazar Patrika* called this "socialist experiment".

Bakasht land was occupied all over the area. But unfortunately here too the leadership let down the kisans.

The movement in Shahabad was being guided by the Radical Democrats and they were so overwhelmed by the sweep and power of the struggle that they were very soon in a panic and accepted the White Collector as an arbitrator. The Sahib's award was, as expected, a complete negation of the kisans' rights for it stipulated that the kisans could take *Bakasht* land only on payment of *nazarana* to the landlord!

Shahabad's kisans are now organising afresh for new battles to win back their right to the stolen *Bakasht* land.

3.B.vi United Provinces

1. Tensions Over Possession of Land in Lucknow District

Extracts from Weekly Report No. 29, 26 July 1946. Weekly Reports; CID Records, Government of the United Provinces (1946); Uttar Pradesh State Archives.

... In police circle Kakori, Lucknow District, there is tension between a zamindar and his tenants over the former trying to dispossess the latter of their fields;....

2. Kisan Sabha Activities in the United Provinces

Article, 'UP kisans wage unprecedented battles'. *People's Age*, 8 September 1946.

The villages of the United Provinces are aflame with a new light. The kisans are on the march in a battle unprecedented in several centuries. From the day the Congress Ministries were formed and popular opinion began to press for anti-zamindari legislation, panicky UP landlords had started hitting right and left at the kisan.

They sought to forestall anti-zamindari legislation by ejecting kisans from their lands. Papers were forged and thousands of bighas of land tilled by kisans were shown as zamindars' *sir* (self-tilled) land.

Kisans were sought to be prevented by force of arms from cultivating fields which had been in their possession for decades. Kisan Sabha workers were assaulted and brutally beaten up. In Jhansi, a Mandal Congress Committee member was shot by a zamindar. In Bareilly, two kisans were murdered in a land dispute.

Soon the kisans all over the Province rose in a mighty counter-offensive under the Red flag. Reports of their action in district after district are daily pouring in. While the Ministry in the UP is preoccupied with passing a pious resolution on abolition of zamindari with compensation the kisans are seizing landlords' fallow lands, grazing fields and lands from which landlords seek forcibly to eject them.

A short while ago, scores of kisan deputations could be seen at Lucknow going from one Congress Minister to another, beseeching their help in securing them their lost lands. But from everywhere they got the same reply. The Congress Ministers and the Provincial Congress leaders told the kisans: "We are sorry for your plight. But we cannot go against the law. We must accept the entries in Patwaris' papers. And after all, you have borne zamindars' oppression for so long. Wait for a while, we have already passed a resolution accepting the principle of the abolition of landlordism."

Dejected and desperate, kisans went for aid to the Kisan Sabha and Communist Party leaders. This happened in a number of districts. From them kisans got a new message. Kisan Sabha and Communist leaders told the peasants: "We shall readily come to help you. But first you must stand up on your own legs. Don't look towards the law courts and big leaders. They are all in the hands of the landlords. Organise yourselves, take the Red flag in your hands and seize the land that the zamindar has snatched away from you.

"Landlordism will not be abolished merely by passing pious resolutions. It will be abolished by you—by the strength of your own action in fighting oppression and for justice for yourselves."

The message sounded true to the kisans. They decided to act upon it. In Aligarh, Rae Bareilly, Basti, Fatehpur, Sultanpur and Unnao, they regained thousands of acres of their lost land; and in this battle, forged unity of Hindu, Muslim and Untouchable kisans, and of kisans and agricultural labourers.

The Burden of Landlordism

The total area of land under cultivation in the UP is three crores and 60 lakhs of acres.

More than half of this total, i.e., two crores of acres, are owned by only six thousand big zamindars.

Of the total Population of 5½ crores in the Province, more than a crore have not an inch of land. They earn their livelihood by working in the fields on a few annas as their daily wage and when rain starts they go from village to village in search of a bigha or two of land.

The zamindars extort 17 crores of rupees every year from the peasants in the form of rent. In the last forty years, they have received two hundred and 25 crores of rupees as rent only, which is more than the present price of all cultivated land in the Province.

IN ALIGARH

Seizing Their Rightful Land

The big zamindar of Nehra in Aligarh, Bohre Bhagwati Prasad, claims 700 bighas of kisans' land in Nehra and several thousands of bighas of land in some other villages as his *Sir* on the strength of fraudulent entries in the Patwari's papers. He ordered his lathi-armed men not to allow kisans to till these lands this year, as he wanted to give these lands to other tenants on a high rate of *nazarana*. By this black marketing operation he intended to enrich himself to the tune of a lakh of rupees.

The kisans were in a panic. The sowing season was coming to an end. So they approached Ganeshpal Singh, Secretary of the Aligarh District Kisan Sabha. He advised them to first organise themselves and then quietly proceed to till their lands. Accordingly, the kisans in a body marched to their lands; the zamindar's *lathials* were put to flight and 690 bighas of land were sown.

The zamindar now took resort to law courts. Cases under Section 107 were instituted against the kisans. They were also summoned under Section 145 to prove their possession of the land. They approached Seth Shrichand Singhal, the local Congress MLA, who pleaded, "What can you do against the law? Pat came the kisans' smashing reply: "If you are so punctilious about the law, why do you demand the British to quit? Does not the law forbid 'Quit India?'"

Committee of Action

Disgusted, the kisans formed a Committee of Action of their own. They sent a deputation to meet the Ministers at Lucknow. This had the desired effect. The Section 145 cases were withdrawn.

Three more kisans have now taken possession of the land from which they had been ejected. Kisans of Lodha are also preparing to 'reconquer' their lost lands. The zamindar's plan of enriching himself by taking *nazarana* for the looted lands has gone awry.

Reports from another village, Nagala Bhup Singh, in the same district, are even more stirring.

The zamindar of this village is one Thakur Gulzar Singh. Mention of even the name of the Congress by a tenant did not go unpunished in this feudal overlord's domains.

This unscrupulous zamindar had taken Rs 14,000 under the 'Grow More Food' scheme from the UP Government for bringing new fallow land under cultivation. After misappropriating the whole of this sum, he got 2500 bighas of his tenants' land entered in the village papers as land newly tilled by himself, thus at the same time pocketing the Rs 14,000 and adding 2500 bighas of good kisan land to his property.

Not content with this, he ordered this year that no kisan should be allowed to graze his cattle in the forest tracts in his zamindari.

The kisans were hard hit. A number of them went to the city to seek redress in law courts. There they met the popular kisan leader of the district Munshi Gajadhar Singh.

The Kisan Sabha workers first approached the District Congress Committee Secretary who, however, refused to interfere with the 'course of law' and dismissed the kisans with a promise to institute some sort of enquiry into their grievances. He abused Kisan Sabha and Communist workers in the bargain as people out to create trouble and ruin the kisans.

The Kisan Sabha took the cause of Nagala Bhup Singh's kisans in its hands. Workers were sent to the village and a meeting of kisans was called.

This is a backward locality. The kisans had no notion of how a meeting should be organised. Ordinary policemen at the instance of the zamindar still dared to frighten them into submission by their *lal pugree*.

Zamindar's Scares

The zamindar assisted by some local Congressmen tried all sorts of scares to strike terror in the kisans' hearts. A policeman was sent every day to make a round of the village. Rumours that there would be firing and armed attack by the zamindar on the meeting if it was held, were spread.

None of these tactics, however, availed. And in July finally 1500 kisans armed with long lathis gathered at Nagala Bhup Singh for their first meeting.

Resolutions demanding the immediate abolition of zamindari without compensation, reasserting kisans' right to their lands from which they had been driven away and the right to use the forest pastures were adopted in the meeting.

It was decided that the last resolution be implemented then and there.

"To the Forests"

The cry went forth from several hundred throats—"Untie your cattle! To the forests, one and all!"

Famished cattle were then taken out in a battle array followed by kisans with lathis on their shoulders. The chowkidars of the landlord who had come to attend the meeting declared: "We are with the kisans; we shall not prevent them from going to the forests."

So the kisans marched in triumph to the forest. That happened to be a festival day. And the kisans and their cattle did make a festive occasion of it. While the cattle grazed their fill in the green pastureland, kisans, old and young, carolled in the true spirit of a festival. A second meeting of the kisans was held on the spot and the victory celebrated.

A New Kisan

The kisan of Nagala Bhup Singh is a changed man today. He has learnt to be vigilant for his rights.

A few days after this incident news came to the kisans that the zamindar was marching on the village on an elephant. Nagala Bhup Singh and the adjoining villages at once rang with a call for battle. Kisans came out of the village to meet the attack.

But it turned out that it was not the zamindar who was marching on the village on elephant, but a party of Vakils on a Commission of Enquiry. When, in its turn, this party learnt of the kisans' preparation, it took to its heels in false alarm.

The zamindar, the snarl gone from his face, is now going about in the law courts with his tail between his legs. He is hatching conspiracies with local officials to institute criminal cases against kisans and Kisan Sabha workers.

In another village in Aligarh, Ghazipur, the zamindar is a Congress MLC. He cleverly got some of the kisans' land entered in the village papers against the name of an uncle of his. But the kisans have taken possession of half of this land. The other half would soon be taken over by them.

IN RAE BAREILLY

Fighting Back Landlord Oppression

In Rae Bareilly, the first trial of strength between tyrannous taluqdars and their tenants took place in the zamindary of Raja Kushalpal Singh of Kurri-Sudauli.

Kurri-Sudauli had been notorious for its landlord's oppression, the kisans being fleeced like sheep.

The Raja's men had forced many kisans on pain of brutal beating to sign letters giving up their lands and thus acquired claims of hundred of acres of kisan's land.

The Raja had helped the Congress in the elections. So no Congress leader was prepared to go against his interests. The Kisan Sabha then took the matter in its hands. Jitendra Nath Tiwary made a tour of Kurri-Sudauli and told the kisans that nothing except their own organised strength and initiative would help them.

Labourers Up in Arms

First, the labourers of the Raja's zamindary were up in arms. They struck work. The Raja was soon compelled to raise their wages from Rs 8 to Rs 12.

After this, the kisans, one thousand strong, gathered in a meeting on July 19. They had come with their lathis and their ploughs both. They held a meeting and decided to win back their land. The meeting was converted into a picturesque procession. In the forefront was the

Red flag. Behind it came the ploughs and oxen followed by a solid phalanx of kisans with their lathis on their shoulders.

Jitendra was the first to till the fields in token of the kisans' possession. The zamindars' men had taken to their heels at the very sight of the kisans. The land which belonged to them was now again safely in the hands of the kisans.

This victory of the kisans has had a very salutary effect on landlords. A mere notice now from the Kisan Sabha has been enough in many cases to make landlords give up their ill-gotten lands.

But, for this grand achievement, Jitendra has had to pay heavily. After Kurri-Sudauli he undertook a tour of the estate of the Raja of Shivagrah.

One day, while Jitendra was passing near the village of Paharpur about one hundred *lathials* of the Raja fell upon him. He was mercilessly beaten, dragged on the ground and then locked till evening inside a room!

And this Raja is a Congress M.L.A., who claims to be a great votary of non-violence and a faithful follower of Mahatma Gandhi.

This incident roused the kisans of Shivagarh. Five thousand kisans gathered on August 9 in Paharpur where they pledged themselves to put an end for ever to the Raja's oppression. The Raja sent his men to break this meeting, but they did not dare.

Next morning, however, they again attacked Jitendra Kumar while he was going to Bachhrawan. Armed with lathis, spears and guns they also attacked the villages of Paharpur and Dhakawan.

But they have failed to daunt the kisans who are consolidating their organisation and are ready to fight on if necessary in defence of their rights.

IN BASTI

Kisan Sabha Forces Govt to Intervene

Basti is another district where the kisans are in the forefront of the new upsurge.

Here is a report from the Congress Hindi daily *Adhikar* of Lucknow which typifies the new awakening.

A mammoth meeting of kisans was held last Sunday at Tekahari with Mr Prithwi Lal Sharma in the chair. Tekahari is three miles from Barhni railway station, but kisans poured in a continuous stream from the station to the meeting place. Groups of kisans singing songs, and shouting revolutionary slogans with their village bands in front came marching to Tekahari.

Never was such a big meeting held in this locality. After the meeting was over, 3500 kisans armed with lathis, singing songs, shouting slogans and with bands playing marched in a procession. Hundreds of women participated in the procession.

This mass awakening is the result of several battles waged by the kisans against landlords' excesses under the able guidance of their Kisan Sabha leaders.

Below we give some brief reports

The Raja of Manso is a notorious landlord of Basti. There is a small patch of greenland midstream in river Sarjoo which the kisans used as pasture land. This year the Raja sent his *lathials* to prevent the kisans from using it.

Two days after this, the kisans held a meeting and organised themselves into their Kisan Sabha. And no sooner than this preliminary preparation was made, five hundred of them marched with lathis on their shoulders to capture the land.

Terror-stricken the landlords' men fled at the very sight of this army. The kisans now continue to use the pastureland.

The Sheikhs of Chetra ruled with an iron hand in their extensive zamindari. Their very name inspired terror in ryots' hearts.

But this year the kisans refused to let the Sheikhs' men take possession of their land. So one day the Sheikhs descended with their whole might on village Dudama and set fire to it.

It was, however, a different kisan that met them this time. Every villager came out of his hut to meet the attack and gave battle to the Sheikhs. After pitched fighting, the kisans captured 14 men of the Sheikhs and also the property they had looted from the village.

Police Back Landlord

But the police took the landlords' side. They arrested the kisans and instituted cases against them. The kisans however, were determined. They declared: "We shall contest the case in the law courts, and shall reply with our lathis to those who would dare take our land."

Ultimately the Provincial Government had to intervene in the matter. Mr Charan Singh, Parliamentary Secretary, was sent for inspection to the village. The Sheikhs had to admit before him that hundreds of bighas of land which were shown as landlords' in the village papers in fact belonged to the tenants. They had to sign this declaration and thus the kisans won hundreds of bighas of land.

Similarly, the landlord of Dohria, who, during the last Congress regime, had impudently defied the advice of Mr Charan Singh to give their land back to the kisans, was compelled this time by kisans to recognise their hereditary right to half of the lands in dispute.

IN UNNAO

Forming Their Own Lal Fauj

Here are some encouraging reports from the district of Unnao.

The village of Makur witnessed a stirring spectacle on August 15. A column of kisan youth, 150 strong, issued forth from the village carrying Red Flags and leading a thousand heads of cattle. They quickly approached the village grazing field and planted a Red flag there. The cattle freely grazed in the field while the kisans stood guard.

Only a few days ago the landlord of the village had threatened the villagers with dire consequences if they went near the grazing field. But neither he nor his men dared come out and stop the kisans. The kisans had declared that the grazing field belonged to the village and there they are now.

The kisans have now organised a village *panchayat* too. The *panchayat* will "fight oppression" and "institute a new way of life in the village". A Lal Fauj (Red Volunteer corps) has also been formed. Seventy-five of the village youth are already in it.

Such volunteer corps are being organised in several other villages too.

In village Nandauli, a favourite of the landlord had forcibly taken possession of a piece of a kisan's land and was erecting a wall on it. The Lal Fauj took the matter in its hands. Now there is no trace of this wall.

In this very village the police had acted in a high-handed manner in the case of a kisan worker, Mulla. His house was searched "for illicit liquor" at the instigation of the landlord. The Lal Fauj held a mighty protest demonstration and the local kisan leader, Raghunath, warned

the police that if such high-handed acts were repeated, it would be difficult to prevent the kisans from dealing in a drastic manner with the police.

The village *panchayat* of Nandauli is now raising a subscription of Rs 200 in order to fight oppression and improve the life of the village.

Dalhepur, Kursath, Pirthikhera and Sumanikhera are some of the other villages where Lal Fauj has been organised. In Dalhepur the Lal Fauj has succeeded in restoring their land to several kisans.

The kisans of Unnao are preparing for a big *morcha* against the taluqdars of Tiar. These taluqdars have forced their kisans to sign deeds of resignation from 900 bighas of land. They are using threats and intimidations against the kisans. But the new peasant awakening in Unnao brooks no interference or delay. It is forging swiftly ahead.

IN SULTANPUR

No Submission Now to Ejectments

In Sultanpur district, a kisan named Ram Adhar Yadava of village Bramadpur was forcibly ejected from his land by the Taluqdar of Dhavarka who is the landlord of the village. The kisan made an appeal to the DCC and the local Congress MIA but received no help from them.

Ultimately he came to the Kisan Sabha which at once moved in the matter.

On June 17, a meeting of the kisans of the locality was called in the neighbouring village of Nakatava Muradabad. The kisans in this meeting pledged their active support to the oppressed kisan. Next day they assembled in a body and with ten ploughs went and took possession of the land for the kisan.

After the kisan had sown the field, the Taluqdar one day sent his men to plough out the seeds. The kisan's wife who protested against this was severely beaten. On hearing this kisans of the village rushed to the spot and again drove away the landlord's men.

After some days the landlord made the third attempt to forcibly take possession of the field, this time with the help of fifty *lathials* and an elephant.

As soon as these aggressors approached the field, alarm was raised and an army of 2000 kisans from all the adjoining villages rushed to the place.

The zamindar's men took to their heels but left the elephant with a spear in its trunk to charge at and trample the villagers. But the beast met with such a barrage of stones that it had to beat a hasty retreat.

Now, the kisans are determined not to let the landlord's goondas approach within a mile of their land.

In another village, the landlord ejected a Kevat (boatman by caste) kisan from his land and gave the same to his chauffeur. The kisan appealed to the local Congress Committee, but nothing was done.

So he went to the Kisan Sabha. Kisan Sabha workers came to the village. They planted a Red flag in the kisan's field and told kisan women, "Now you have to defend the honour of this flag. Whoever dares to come to this field must be beaten back".

The women now stand guard in the field which no one has dared approach. The kisan again tills his land.

The landlord of Narharpur rented out the 30-bigha jungle in the village to a Brahmin after taking a good amount of money from him. The kisans were deprived of their cattle's pasture

land. But they would not keep quiet. In a body, they met the Brahmin and their united pressure had its effect. He will not think of taking the jungle any more!

Many more small victories have been won by kisans in Sultanpur. The district promises soon to be in the forefront of the new kisan upsurge.

3. Zamindars Fight the Abolition of Their Order

Extracts from Weekly Report No. 37, 20 September 1946. Weekly Reports; CID Records, Government of the United Provinces (1946); Uttar Pradesh State Archives.

... The Zamindars have been active organising themselves to fight the abolition of their order in Azamgarh, Bara Banki, Etah and Mainpuri.

In Bara Banki and Gorakhpur tension between kisans and zamindars is reported to be on the increase....

4. Tensions in Basti

News report, 'Peasants gather crop without permission'. *Hindustan Times*, 23 September 1946.

Lucknow, September 27. A dispute between kisans and zamindars in Basti district which had been persisting for some time came to a climax the other day, when defying an injunction of the Sub-Divisional Magistrate, about 4000 kisans, reported to be armed with lathis, harvested 200 bighas of paddy in the village Chhetehra.

A party of armed police sent to the village to enforce the Magistrate's order it is stated, stood watching helplessly perhaps feeling unequal to the strength of the other side.

Cause of Dispute

The story behind the injunction order and its breach is that the zamindar of Chhetehra village claimed rice fields as his *khudkasht* while the kisans said that the fields were under their cultivation. The zamindar took the matter to court which passed the above interim order.

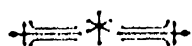
Five kisan workers have been arrested in this connection.

The passage of resolution on the abolition of zamindari by the Assembly last month has made kisans conscious that they are the owners of the land. This feeling is more pronounced in areas where peasantry is more oppressed.

Need for Propaganda

In order therefore to ensure observance of the existing law till it is replaced the Government may have to carry on regular propaganda in the villages telling the people to wait till the Act is finally passed by the Legislature.

With regard to Basti, the Government has already received complaints that a large area of land in that district is recorded as *sir* or *khudkasht* though it is in the possession of tenants. The Government proposes to appoint a special officer to inquire into such disputes and correct the record where necessary.



5. Zamindars Mobilise Support for Their Cause

Article, 'UP kisans fight back landlord offensive'. *People's Age*, 29 September 1946.

"Do or Die", said Nawab Mohammad Yusuf presiding over the Provincial Zamindar Conference sometime ago. His slogan means, "Either beat the kisan into submission or the zamindari system would come to an end."

Fully conscious of the fact that the end of their system of oppression has come near the zamindars are trying all their tricks to retain as much land as possible even after abolition of landlordism, and to make as much money as they can before it. And this they are doing in a very systematic and organised manner.

They have held two Provincial Conferences where they planned bloodshed in private and in public too; they have declared that "rivers of blood shall flow" if any attempt is made to deprive them of the right of sucking the blood of their tenants.

Wooing Smaller Zamindars

They have united the two main organisations of their class in the UP, the Agra Provincial Zamindar Association and the British India Association of Oudh Taluqdars. In every way they are trying to attract the smaller zamindar, who was till now kept away from these organisations because membership was so far based on the revenue one paid.

When a delegate complained in the open session of the first Conference at Lucknow that equal treatment was not meted out to them. Rani Phool Kumari at once stood up and said that there was no question of rich or poor among them; the existence of the entire class was at stake, and unless all of them united, they could not save themselves.

In every district, efforts are being made to activate the old Zamindar Associations by enrolling professional goondas as volunteers. Action Committees are being formed and in some districts organisations with new names, such as Progressive Zamindars' Association, are being set up to provide cover to those of them who have associated themselves with reactionary movements in the past.

A Well Planned Offensive

On the one hand, they are sending deputation after deputation to the Ministry, planning to seek Gandhiji's intervention on their behalf, trying to win over by all means village Congress workers, and are even sending whole-timers (paid from the funds they are raising) into the Congress to work on their behalf in rural areas.

On the other hand, they have launched a Province-wide offensive against the kisans because they know that neither Gandhiji's intervention nor the new Revenue Minister (Sjt. Hukum Singh) who has always fought for them both as a Congressman and as a lawyer, can save them. Nawab Mohd Yusuf is a very class-conscious zamindar who takes 18 kinds of *nazranas* (compulsory offerings) even in 1946. Under his leadership they have planned their offensive well.

In order to retain as much land as possible, they are ejecting hereditary tenants from fields they have tilled for generations, where possible by legal means, where not, by illegal and corrupt means.

They do not hesitate to use the private armies of goondas they are building up against the kisans, and are seizing all fallow land, unfertile land, public thoroughfares, pasture lands and even houses of poor peasants, wherever they can lay their hands on [them].

Tenancy rights over land thus acquired are sometimes transferred to their (zamindars') wives and children and very close relatives and sometime the land is retained by them as *sir* or *khudkash* (i.e., self-tilled land or the zamindars).

They then force the original tenants to work for them as wage-labourers, and at places, even as serfs. Sometimes they sublet it to other peasants after extorting exorbitant *nazranas* from them, retaining the tenancy rights to themselves.

Thus they not only make money today but keep the land safe for tomorrow. This is one flank of their pincer movement against the kisan. The other is their attempt to sow seeds of disunity among the kisans by pitting one against the other, and by raising kisan-mazdoor and Hindu-Muslim issue.

False Entries, Forcible Seizures

The nationalist Press is full of reports of the zamindars' doings. Sjt. Phool Singh, Secretary of the UP Provincial Congress Committee, after visiting Gorakhpur district, said in a statement that the zamindars in that district, "are setting false entries made in the name of their relatives, are forcibly seizing the peasants' crops, tilling the fallow land, seizing granaries, public thoroughfares and pasturelands to which they have no legal title and are getting the trees cut to the detriment of the kisans. {*Bharat*, (Hindi), Allahabad, August 9, 1946}.

Similarly, Sjt. Rishi Narain, Officiating President of the Benares Dist Congress Committee, reported that, "the zamindars are forcibly occupying unfertile lands, public thoroughfares and irrigation canals and are thereby causing inconceivable hardships to the peasantry." {*Sansar*, (Hindi), Benares, September 1, 1946}.

Congress Leader's Warning

Sjt. Balgangadhar Tripathi, Secretary of the Unnao District Congress Committee, also came out with a statement asking the zamindars to desist from such forcible seizures and warning them that if they did not do so, they would be responsible for driving the peasants to retaliation. {*Adhikar*, (Hindi), Lucknow, September 7, 1946}.

The Hon'ble Mr Rafi Ahmed Kidwai, the Home Minister of the UP, also admitted in the Provincial Assembly that he had received innumerable complaints from the peasants against such doings on the part of the zamindars.

In a recent speech at a meeting organised by the Basti District Congress Committee, he, while asking the kisans not to seize other's lands, also called upon them to resist if anybody makes any attempt to occupy their lands. {*Bharat*, (Hindi), Allahabad, September 10, 1946}.

However, where the kisans are not organised in their independent Kisan Sabhas under the Red flag, the zamindars have to a large extent succeeded in their game. Unorganised and scattered, the kisans can offer but a very weak resistance to the zamindars' crushing offensive.

At some places, individual families or groups of peasants have in sheer desperation taken up lathis and there have been clashes with casualties on both sides. (Gorakhpur, Bareilly, Jhansi, etc.) but the victors have always been the zamindars with their ruthless bands of armed goondas.

Secret Bands—A Dangerous Trend

This has sometimes led to the formation of secret bands of desperate kisans bent on taking revenge.

The report from Hardoi printed elsewhere on this page is an indication of this dangerous trend which must be stopped by all patriotic men who should come forward to help to lead and organise the scattered might of the peasants in the battle against their oppressors and save the peasants from desperation.

For wherever kisans are organised and led by the Red flag or even where they have merely heard of the way the organised kisans at other places are struggling, they have successfully fought back the zamindars' attacks and have succeeded in regaining their lost land, in stopping many illegal and oppressive practices of the landlords and their underlings and in building a strong unity of their class.

3.B.vii Punjab

1. Punjab Kisans Demand More Water for Irrigation

Extracts from an article, 'Punjab kisans launch first postwar battle'. *People's Age*, 4 August 1946.

The 16th of July was a red letter day in the history of Punjab kisans. At village Chhina in Amritsar district the kisans started their first postwar struggle. It was a fight for their very existence, a fight against the corrupt Irrigation Department which denied supply of water to their fields. A *morcha* was launched today by a batch of 15 kisans led by Achhar Singh Chhina, Vice-President of the Punjab Kisan Sabha, by widening the *moghas* (canal outlets).

Long before the scheduled time, came batches of kisans from neighbouring villages. They came in processions, playing bands and carrying their own flags. They owed allegiance to different political parties—Congress, Communists and Akalis—but that could not stop the kisans from coming together to fight their common battle.

The kisans came carrying their flags—it was a blending of the Congress Tricolour, the Red banner and the flag of the Akali Party....

2. Kisans of All Communities Join Hands in Punjab Morcha

Extracts from an article 'All kisans, Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs behind Punjab morcha'. *People's Age*, 18 August 1946.

This report comes straight from the hub of the biggest kisan movement the Punjab has seen for many years—the Amritsar district morcha for the remodelling of canal outlets (the story of which was reported in the *People's Age* a fortnight ago). Harsha Chhina—the name of this village-hub—will go down in the annals of history as a major battlefield in the Indian struggle for independence.

In the Punjab there have been great peasant struggles before also. There were the great Akali struggles of the 'twenties for the possession of the Gurdwaras. The Civil Disobedience movements of the 'thirties brought Punjabi kisans again to their feet. In the early war years, there were kisan *morchas* in Lahore district against the increase in land revenue rates.

They were in many ways greater struggles than this one. But Harsha Chhina's *morcha* is bigger than them all, because it is not confined to any one section of the kisans, to the following of any one political party. It is a united struggle of all Amritsar's kisans. It is backed by the united might of all Punjab's kisans. The movement grows bigger everyday. Watch it closely. It heralds a new round of freedom battles in the Punjab's village.

Harsha Chhina, 3-8-46

Today is the nineteenth day of the morcha. Three hundred and eighty-four arrests have so far been made. These three hundred and eighty-four include workers of all parties—the Congress, the League, the Communist Party, the Akali Dal, the Kisan Sabha. They include all the six members of the officially recognised elected Panchayat and five out of the eight *lambardars* (village officials) of the village.

3. Jat Unionists of East Punjab Turn to Congress

Extracts from an article, 'Kisan battles in Punjab'. *People's Age*, 25 August 1946.

Another kisan struggle has been started in eastern Punjab, and up to August 15, 120 people have been put under arrest.

Placed in a remote corner of the Province adjoining Bikaner State, the sturdy Jats of Hissar have been the bulwark of imperialism for many years. There has been very little political movement in this ilaqua and reactionary Hindus like the late Sir Chhoturam represented the kisans in the last Assembly.

But of late, a new awakening has come to the peasantry of the area and for the first time they gave a crushing defeat to today Unionist Hindus and elected Congressmen to the Assembly.

In four villages—Chottala, Tejakhera, Bharukhera and Asakhera --live 6000 Muzharas (tenants) ruled by 20 landlords. Nineteen of them behave like little tyrants putting to shame the atrocities of the autocrat of the neighbouring Bikaner State. The only exception is Choudhri Sahib Ram, Congress MLA, who sides with the tenants in their battle against landlords' oppression.

There are 45,000 bighas of land in an area owned by 20 families. The Muzharas have been tilling this land for the last 200 years. In return the poor Muzharas had to give *begar* (free labour), *salami* of Rs 5 to landlords for every marriage in tenants' families and a hundred other similar feudal dues.

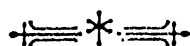
And today the Muzharas are being ejected from the land— the land which they have ploughed for 200 years and made fertile by their toil.

4. Irrigation Department Gives in to Kisans'

Demand for More Water

Extracts from an article, 'Punjab kisan morcha won but ministry refuses to release 700 prisoners'. *People's Age*, 6 October 1946.

After two months of heroic battle, the kisan struggle at Harsha Chhina (District Amritsar) has ended in victory. The corrupt Irrigation Department has suffered a severe defeat and has been compelled to give the fighting kisans fifty per cent more water than they would have got had they not demolished the canal outlets and acquiesced in the new official scheme of water distribution....



5. Punjab's Muslim Peasantary Revolts Against League Landlords

Extracts from an article, 'Punjab Muslim peasants raise banner of revolt'. *People's Age*, 6 October 1946.

Jullundur

In Jullundur, a battle is raging in Rahon and 20 other villages. The landlords—the local 'leaders' of the League and the Majlis-i-Ahrar—deprived the tenants of their grazing land. The tenants organised. There was a ban on processions. But the tenants did not care about bans.

And a mighty procession marched through the whole area—a procession in which the chief participants were cattle, carrying placards and posters, voicing the kisans' grievances. The oldest Muslim kisan of the district led the procession carrying a huge green Muslim League flag.

One of the posters carried a famous quotation of Iqbal: "Those who till the land own it. Arise, oh kisans! The world is taking a new shape. In the East and the West, a new era is coming."

Other posters declared: "We want fodder", "Kisans are the backbone of the nation."

The authorities, of course, have jumped in to protect the landlords. Proceedings have been launched against 58 kisans. The battle continues unabated.

Hoshiarpur

Another heroic struggle is being fought by the Muslim peasants at Urmartanda, Hoshiarpur district. Here Shahbaz Khan, the local League President, owns 2800 acres of land and true to his feudal tribe he has been committing all sorts of excesses for years.

Extortion, illegal taxes, *begar*, evictions—nothing is outside Shahbaz Khan's bag of tricks. No tenant can even cut a branch of a single tree on his acres.

At last his kisans decided that they would no longer submit to the tyrant. Ten thousand of them organised themselves in a Tenant Committee.

They held a meeting under the Muslim League flag and passed a resolution removing Shahbaz Khan from the Presidentship of the League.

"The man who exploits us and makes our life miserable has no right to be at the head of our organisation," they decided.

A copy of the resolution has been sent to the Provincial Muslim League Headquarters. But as a local Muslim kisan said: "We know the landlord-League leadership will support Shahbaz Khan against us. That will not ... deter us from the path we have chosen. We shall fight to the end."

On 'Direct Action' Day Shahbaz Khan played a trick. He hired some goondas and started preaching: "This is a day of *Jehad*. The Muslim peasants are being misguided by the enemies of Islam to fight their own men."

The peasants gave him a fitting reply on 'Id' Day by organising a joint Hindu-Muslim-Sikh procession. They marched through the area raising unity slogans, directed only against imperialism and the landlords.

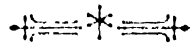
Shahbaz Khan knows now that his communal preaching will no longer save him from the might of his tenants.

Multan

In Multan district also, the landlords are all League leaders. Here the Muslim, Hindu and Sikh tenants have begun a united fight against the landlords.

Mian Mumtaz Daultana (Secretary of the Punjab Muslim League), Budhan Shah, MLA, and other stalwarts of the local Muslim League are facing the united wrath of the peasants. Daultana has evicted a number of his tenants without the slightest excuse.

Extortion is rampant. The landlords insist on getting between two and eight seers per maund of the crop separated as an illegal "reserve" before the crop is sheared. The tenants held a meeting recently and decided that they would pay nothing over and above the legal share. They have organised themselves and a big fight has begun.



Chapter 4. Communalism

Hindu-Muslim riots emerged as the dominant feature of the Indian scene in the second half of 1946, particularly after the Great Calcutta Killings set off by the Muslim League's call for Direct Action on 16 August. Communalism shattered the aspirations and hopes aroused by the popular anti-British upsurges of the early months of that year, and continued in a way by the many examples of united labour actions recorded in Chapter 3. From a bargaining counter, Partition started getting transformed into a catastrophic reality.

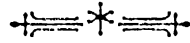
The documents collated in this chapter have acquired a terrifying topicality and relevance in the India of recent years, particularly after the destruction of the Babri Masjid, and inevitably suggest reflections on patterns of affinities and contrasts. Muslim communalism in 1946 as embodied in the policies and leadership of the League had managed to arrogate to itself, with some plausibility and considerable British assistance, the position of spokesman for an entire community—a position, however, which was never uncontested and which proved only temporary, as revealed by the first elections held under universal suffrage in East Pakistan just a few years later. Hindu communal forces were more disparate, with a cutting edge represented by the RSS and the Hindu Mahasabha, groups apparently marginal but with considerable linkages and affinities at times with elements inside the Congress mainstream. The communalism of a majority community, as Nehru would state in 1958, has the advantage of often appearing 'national' and is therefore all the more formidable. The centrality in Indian politics today of the RSS and its affiliates, above all the BJP, there was a aurous light back on the events of 1946. This ascendancy was ushered in by the massive communal riots of 1992–93, since 1946–47.

The documents in this chapter, as elsewhere, consist of official reports, extracts from newspapers and journals, and a certain amount of material from organised groups. Muslim League papers, however, are not available, nor are the archives of the RSS open. Official documentation on riots is also somewhat uneven, with relatively little, for instance, on the Calcutta riots of 1946—the Governor's reports being excluded as already available in Mansergh.

Arrangement, like in the preceding chapter on labour and peasant movements, proved a formidable problem. The structure eventually decided upon consists of provincial subsections, with a chronological presentation within each. As between the various provinces, the ordering roughly follows that of the major riots. Thus we begin with Bengal and Bihar, as the Calcutta-Noakhali-Bihar sequence remains too deeply ingrained in memory to be disrupted, followed by Bombay, United Provinces, and Delhi. Then come the relatively less affected regions, which included in 1946 still the Punjab, as well as the entire South.

Riot documentation cannot but be extremely depressing reading, but the collection here is not entirely bereft of glimmerings of hope. Flashes survive in them of instances of sanity and courage, of tremendously impressive examples of Muslims, Hindus and Sikhs saving each others' lives at great personal risk, of martyrs in the cause of communal amity, of Hindu-Muslim joint action against communalism. No representation of 1946 can be satisfactory without the epic of the Mahatma in Noakhali, and we have deliberately broken our usual principles of selection to present a few extracts from his speeches and writings there, even though they are being taken from the

published corpus of Gandhi's writings. As impressive, sometimes, and almost entirely forgotten, are the instances of heroic anti-communal initiative, usually under Communist or Left leadership, and reported most notably in the pages of *People's Age*. The anti-communal efforts remained disparate and scattered, with the Communist journal for instance saying little about Gandhi. They failed, as we know, to avert the mass killings, Partition, and the murder of the Mahatma—but to such endeavours, surely, goes part of the credit of India becoming a secular and democratic state. [Ed.]



4.i BENGAL

1. Touchy Communal Situation in Dhaka

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Bengal for the first half of May 1946. File No. 18/5/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Communal

There have been few outward expressions of communal feeling during the fortnight, though the Commissioner, Dacca Division, points out that minor incidents continue to reveal how touchy people have become, particularly among the less educated including the student classes, and how inherently dangerous the whole situation must be held to be. The defilement of a mosque at Barakar in Burdwan district, though resulting in some communal feeling, did not, owing to be the restraint exercised by the Muslims lead to any untoward incident. In Jessore communal relations, strained, as a result of the elections and of the alleged defilement of a mosque in Gwalior State improved following the formation by local officers of Peace Committees.

2. Burdwan and Jessore Incidents

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Bengal for the second half of May 1946. File No. 18/5/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Communal

In the district of burdwan previous communal tension at Purbastali in the subdivision of Kalna over the proposed sacrifice of cows had unfortunate repercussions during the fortnight. Following an altercation on the 16th between a Hindu customer and a Muslim sweetmeat stall-keeper at a *mela* at Jamalpur in the Kalna subdivision, a fight ensued between groups of the two communities resulting in injuries to several persons—three of whom, Muslims, later died. During the next few days Muslims and Hindus collected hundreds strong on a number of occasions and there was considerable arson and looting of villages. The area is very badly served by communications and though a considerable body of police was rushed to the area, it was not until the 19th that the situation was brought under control. So far as can be ascertained at present seven persons, all Muslims, lost their lives, over a hundred arrests have been made, and over a thousand injured have received treatment. No exact assessment of the damage to property has yet been prepared though it is certain to be considerable. No incidents have been reported since the 19th and the situation can be said to be well under control. A number of conciliation meeting have been held and the area has already been visited twice by the Hon'ble Finance Minister.

The tension referred to in the district of Jessore, temporarily quietened by the formation of Peace Committees, was again brought to a head on the 11th May at Lahuria when two Muslims who had seized cattle belonging to some Namasudras were killed as a result of a quarrel with members of that community. The Local Muslims were subsequently reinforced from Magura (in the district of Jessore) and from the district of Faridpur, and fresh trouble broke out on the

17th. A pitched battle between large opposing forces of Muslims and Namasudras was only prevented by the arrival of the police who were forced to open fire and killed two Muslims. On the same day a Namasudra village was completely gutted. Constant alarms followed but were prevented from developing owing to the strong police pickets which were posted in the danger area, and by the 22nd the situation, though tense, was under control. It cannot be said, however, that complete harmony has yet been restored in the area.

3. Riots Break Out in Dhaka

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Bengal for the first half of July 1946. File No. 18/7/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

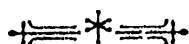
Communal

The unhealthy communal situation emphasised in recent reports degenerated still further during the fortnight when communal riots broke out in Dacca. The trouble started when certain Hindus attempted to take a procession with music in honour of Purna Chandra Das, the Forward Bloc leader, past a mosque at prayer time. An altercation ensued and the spokesmen on behalf of the mosque were assaulted, brickbats were thrown, looting occurred, two mosques were set on fire and two Hindu temples were defiled. Trouble then developed on the usual lines though, for Dacca, in a minor key and during the next few days stray cases of stabbing, some fatal, occurred. An order under Section 144, Criminal Procedure Code, was promulgated on the 2nd and strong police pickets were put down in the affected area. The trouble gradually spread though it was not until the 4th that the situation deteriorated seriously when five stabbing cases were reported and continued to deteriorate on the 5th when three more stabbings occurred and it was found necessary to put the Dacca Defence Scheme into force. The situation began to improve on the 6th and no incident was reported afternoon on that date. Eleven deaths by stabbing occurred, including one constable. A number of preventive arrests were made during the course of the disturbances and a collective fine of Rs 15,000 was imposed, to be collected from two specified areas of the city. It is satisfactory that the Ultarath festival passed off without incident on the 8th and the situation has now returned to normal.

There was some apprehension of communal trouble on the Moiscal island in the Chittagong district when the Hindus took a procession past a mosque by a route which was not previously used: the matter has been amicably settled, however, on the Hindus undertaking in writing not to use that route in future.

There has been no revival of the main communal trouble in the subdivision of Kalna in the district of Burdwan and the distribution of money relief is proceeding there. A minor outbreak did occur, however, in the same area towards the end of last month but the situation did not develop. Though communal relations in the area cannot be said to be happy, no immediate trouble is apprehended.

Armed police are still maintained in the area which was recently the scene of communal disturbances in Jessore, but the situation is reported to be quiet.



4. Bengal Quiet but Tense

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Bengal for the second half of July 1946. File No. 18/7/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Communal

Feeling in the Monteswar thana of the Kalna subdivision of Burdwan district remains somewhat tense, each community showing great liveliness in bringing cases and counter-cases against the other with allegations, if possible, of communal violence.

The situation in Lahoria, the area recently the scene of communal disturbances in the district of Jessore, is at present quiet.

In Dacca, too, the disturbances referred to in the last report have now subsided and, so far as the postal strike allows, the city is back to normal but the two major communities continue to view each other with distrust and suspicion. It is heartening, however, that during the recent disturbances in this city there was a fairly general feeling even among people who are not ordinarily on the side of established authority in favour of strong measures and the immediate enforcement of the Defence scheme, the imposition of collective fines, and the calling out of the Eastern Frontier Rifles to supplement the ordinary police pickets were strongly recommended by these persons. Various persons, too, both Hindus and Muslims, came forward to do propaganda on behalf of communal unity—including some members of political groups traditionally associated with violence and recently released from jail.

5. Calcutta Erupts After Direct Action Day

Extracts from a news report, 'Calcutta riots death-roll mounts'. *Hindustan Times*, 18 August 1946.

Calcutta, August 17. The whole city of Calcutta is in the grip of terror. Rioting and looting which started yesterday continued throughout the night and the situation grew worse in the morning. While no official statement of casualties was available, conservative nonofficial estimates placed the figures at about 270 dead and 1600 injured in the two days. The Fire Brigade attended about 500 calls today, while they answered about 400 calls yesterday.

In a statement issued late in the night, the Government of Bengal state that the general situation throughout Calcutta was very tense. Casualties in the two days' rioting have yet to be ascertained, but the number of deaths arising out of the clashes must be great.

The police opened fire many times today to disperse unruly crowds and prevent looting. For the first time since the rioting started British and Indian troops were out on patrol duty in the afternoon. Armoured cars were also patrolling College Square, Cornwallis Street, Mirzapore Street, Upper Circular Road and other areas in North Calcutta.

Section 144, CrPC, was promulgated in the morning in the city prohibiting the assembly of more than five persons and the carrying of weapons. The report that the city would be placed under martial law was contradicted by an official of the Bengal Government.

Reports of stabbing, assaults on women, burning of houses and looting of shops on a big scale are being received from different parts of the city. In several cases pedestrians have been pushed from the Howrah Bridge down into the Hooghly.

Two leading hospitals in Calcutta are so full with riot victims that they are unable to take any more, according to ambulance workers. Some new cases, as they arrive, are being diverted to the Indian Military Hospital.

Bus and tram services in the city are paralyzed. Suburban train services have been suspended and the telephone service dislocated. Many of the morning newspapers in the city failed to come out and others which appeared in reduced size, could not be distributed leading to spread of rumours and panic.

The house of Mr K.S. Roy, leader of the Congress Party in the Bengal Assembly, was surrounded by a mob in the morning. Anxious messages were sent out and the police rushed to the spot.

Among the riot victims is a son-in-law of Mr Kiran Shankar Roy, who was stabbed....

6. Hindu Women and Children Evacuated from North Calcutta

Extracts from news report, 'Death and desolation everywhere'. *Hindustan Times*, 19 August 1946.

... Most pitiful sights were women and children and injured men being evacuated from the north side of the city, which is predominantly Muslim, to Hindu areas in the south. In babbling tearchoked phrases, they told of women being attacked, children being hacked and their menfolk killed before their eyes....

7. Peace March by Hindus and Muslims in Calcutta

News report, 'Peace procession parades streets'. *Hindustan Times*, 19 August 1946.

Calcutta, August 18. A peace procession of Hindus, Muslims and other communities passed through Moulali and Taltola areas this afternoon, carrying Congress, Muslim League and white flags and raising the unity slogan "Hindu-Muslim Ek Ho".

Hindus and Muslims met at Moulali Durga at 11 this morning and conferred on how peace and tranquility could be brought back.

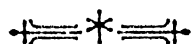
As the peace procession passed through, white flags were hoisted from roadside buildings.

Peace communities have been formed in Tiljala and Park Circus areas. These are both mohalla committees.—API.

8. Congress-League Joint Appeal for Peace

Extracts from a news report, 'Congress-League joint appeal for peace'. *Hindustan Times*, 19 August 1946.

New Delhi, Sunday.... Political quarters in New Delhi are surprised at Mr Sarat Chandra Bose and Mr Surendra Mohan Ghosh associating themselves with Mr Suhrawardy in a joint appeal to the public. The feeling here is that the Bengal Premier is primarily to blame for the riot and that by persuading the Congress leaders to join in an appeal he has merely tried to shield his own guilt.



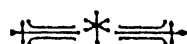
9. Ajmer Hindu Mahasabha Asks for Trial of Bengal Ministry

Statement by Kanwar Chand Karan Sarda, General Secretary, All India Hindu Mahasabha, Ajmer; Ajmer, 24 August 1946. File No. C-117; All India Hindu Mahasabha Papers 1946); Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

Calcutta Riots

The recent organised riots by Muslim goondas in Calcutta clearly show that the Muslim League ministry of Bengal is entirely incompetent and is surely responsible for the murders, arson, loot and loss of property. Nearly twelve thousand persons have been killed and the number of wounded are [is] not less than thirty thousand persons. The loss of property amounts to several crores. The horrible barbarities and cruelties which have been committed on innocent women and children is revolting and passes all comprehension. The Muslim League with its fuehrer Mr Jinnah is enemy no. 1 of the Motherland. His perversity knows no bounds. Mr Suhrawardy the loyal lieut [enant] of Mr Jinnah and the whole Bengal Muslim League ministry should be openly tried for all these murders in Calcutta riots. The Bengal Governor is equally guilty of indifferences, negligence and inactivity and is responsible for his inability to put down the Muslim goondaism in spite of requests and entreaties from the Hindu quarters. We pray HE the Viceroy to immediately suspend the Bengal Muslim League Ministry and appoint an impartial commission to enquire into the causes of the riot and punish the aggressors. It is the imperative duty of HE the Viceroy to take the matter in hand and dismiss the Bengal Ministry. I sympathise with the sufferers and innocent victims of the Calcutta Riot and request HE the Viceroy to immediately grant relief to the victims. Several crores worth of property has been looted by the Muslims and this should be recovered from them by rounding up the Muslim goondas and searching the Muslim League office and important Muslim Leaguers. All Hindus whose shops and houses have been looted should be compensated by the Govt and punitive tax should be imposed on the Muslims of Calcutta alone because they had made prearranged plan to commit riots on the "Direct Action Day". I appeal to the Hindus to organise themselves and not depend on Govt, police or military help. The Hindus should learn to stand on their own legs if they want to avert the coming civil war in India. There have been Hindu-Muslim riots nearly in the fifty places throughout India during the last two months and it is high time that the Hindus should learn the lesson from these riots and join the Hindu Sangathan Movement under the Hindu Maha Sabha flag to save their life and property. If we wish to live as a free nation we must give compulsory military training to our boys and girls. We must gird up our loins and be prepared to fight the coming struggle.

Chand Karan Sarda,
28/8/46,
General Secretary,
All India Hindu Maha Sabha, Ajmer.



10. Calcutta Massacre

Article, 'Calcutta in grip of insane lust for fratricidal blood', *People's Age*, 25 August 1946.

AUGUST 17

Calcutta is now in the grip of a communal orgy the like of which was never seen before—not even in the big riot of 1928. The Muslim League's 'Direct Action Day' on the 16th turned into an open civil war between Hindus and Muslims.

In the glorious Hindu-Muslim demonstrations against the British in November 1945, in February this year, during the naval rising, and as recently as a fortnight ago in the general strike in solidarity with the postal strike—every Hindu or Muslim was safe, only the White sahibs and British troops were unsafe. Today, only the British troops and British civilians are safe in the streets of Calcutta.

Passions Fanned

Embers of communal passions were fanned all through last week. Nazimuddin, Bengal Muslim League leader, made vile attacks on the Congress on his return from the Bombay League Council meeting.

The Bengal Muslim League declared the 16th a public holiday despite the well known and strongly-felt opposition to this move, which was thought to be 'dictatorial'. It was apparently a move to 'avoid clashes' on the 16th—but the storm it raised defeated its very purpose.

The Congress Parliamentary Party staged a walkout from the Bengal Assembly when this vital decision of the Government's was not allowed to be discussed. They followed it up by holding protest meetings in which bitter attacks against the Muslim League were made.

In some League circles too preparations for a showdown on the 16th went on.

As against this, efforts were made to turn the 16th into a mighty anti-British demonstration of solidarity of Hindus and Muslims.

Communist Efforts

The Communist Party exerted itself to preserve the unity of the working-class through extensive campaigns in the entire industrial belt around Calcutta—stressing the importance of maintaining the peace and making the day one of Hindu-Muslim solidarity against British imperialism.

Jyoti Basu, Communist Labour MLA, announced that this would be done through strike or without strike according as the Hindu and Muslim workers themselves decide democratically in each case.

The Calcutta Tramway Workers' Union by a resolution decided to observe strike despite differences with the League's stand—to bring about Hindu-Muslim solidarity against the British.

Abul Hashem, Secretary of the Bengal Muslim League, issued an appeal saying that the fight was against British imperialism and not against the Hindus.

Hell Let Loose

But from the early hours of the 16th, hell was let loose in Calcutta. It is impossible as yet to give full detailed accounts of the day's happenings as most of the people I know are marooned in different localities. Nobody was immune from attack except the British troops—not even the ambulance cars.

In the morning, there was a minor clash at Manicktola when some shops were being forced to close down. Similarly, in the Burra Bazar area there began indiscriminate and unprovoked stabbing—followed by organised looting of shops in the whole locality.

It is known that frenzy gripped even political elements to such a degree that they took sides and at least [?] refused to come out in joint Peace Squads. Red flag volunteers were hooted and threatened in the Burra Bazar area by them for sheltering refugees.

Conflagration Spreads

In Raja Bazar, in Cornwallis Street, which is in the heart of North Calcutta, the conflagration spread like lightning. At the Ripon College hostel, Muslims tried to hoist the Muslim League flag—which brought Hindu students on the streets. At Vivekananda Road, Hindus raided Muslim girl students' hostel. Muslims in turn attacked the Victoria Institution for girls and stabbed the *durwan* [gatekeeper].

In Wellington Square a pitched battle took place between two groups. It is reported that stones were flung at a nearby mosque and a Muslim youth was found stabbed. Immediately, a Muslim crowd made an attack on the house of Dr B.C. Roy and tore off the iron gate. A gentleman from the house implored the crowd to stop. A Communist, Mansur Habib, bravely intervened and after great and heroic effort dissuaded the crowd from breaking into the house.

Looting of Shops

There followed looting of shops all along Dharamtola Street and Suren Bannerjee Road and even the *Ananda Bazar Patrika* office was attacked. In Entally, the Bengal Congress Committee office and the office of the newspaper *Bharat* were attacked—the latter was heavily damaged.

As soon as the news of the first assaults came, the Communist Party leaders contacted other parties and jointly Suhrawardy, Dhiren Mukherji (Congress Whip in the Assembly), Communist Bhupesh Gupta, toured different areas in a car. In another car went Muslim League leader Osman, the Secretary of the BPCC Kalipada Mukherji, and Communist labour leader, Mohammed Ismail. But the situation was already going out of control.

At League Rally

Despite this, at a 2-lac strong Muslim League rally, Nazimuddin made fierce attacks at the Congress. Suhrawardy irresponsibly threatened the Congress if it tried to hold power. Only Ghazanfar Ali of the Punjab, and Abul Hashem made anti-imperialist speeches.

At 8 in the evening, Suhrawardy in a statement claimed that the situation was improving—just when it was going out of control.

All day, trade unionists fought bravely to keep the working-class areas safe and united. But with dusk the situation worsened in Beliaghata and Kidderpore and also in the middle-class areas of Ballygunge and Kalighat.

Large-scale arson started at night in different areas and even some bustlees were set on fire. Streets became scenes of free fights and large-scale stabbings. Hindus in Muslim areas and Muslims in Hindu areas were victims of unspeakable atrocities.

Fighting Back

But determined efforts were made to fight it back. The Seamen's Union at Kidderpore stated that any seaman found participating in the rioting will be expelled from the Union and evicted from the area, and Muslim seamen rescued many Hindu women and children. It was on the

16th also that the All Bengal Muslim Students' League squad went round shouting through loudspeakers: "Communal riot will only help our enemies".

The Indian Red Cross, the Indian National Ambulance Corps, the Pakistan Ambulance Squad and the People's Relief Committee Squad picked up the dead and wounded, and casualties numbered 2000 at least. Hospitals were filled up by the evening.

Police Behaviour

Most amazing was the behaviour of the police. At many places looting took place right under their noses, but they did not stir. At places they said: "We are not to blame". At other places, they said, "We have orders not to interfere". British sahibs moved about freely—glad, I am sure, that Hindus and Muslims were at each other's throats in this city where their position has been the weakest.

On Saturday, assaults, looting and arson increased—curfew was declared, Section 144 imposed, the armed police called out.

But some signs of a return to normal were also seen. The Communist leaders contacted other Party leaders all day and in the afternoon a joint appeal was issued signed by Suhrawardy, Akram Khan, Nazimuddin, Abul Hashem, Hamidul Haque and Noorudin from the League; Sarat Bose, Suren Ghosh, Kiran Shankar Roy, Niharendu Dutt Mazumdar from the Congress; Bhowani Sen and others from the Communist Party; and a local Sikh leader.

A Deep Scar

The great united upsurge of workers and clerks that Calcutta was witnessing in the last few days received an ugly setback through the folly and mutual recriminations of the leaders of the Congress and the Muslim League. Lives and goods were destroyed on a scale unknown before—but much more serious is the deep scar that this nightmare will leave in the hearts of Bengal's Hindus and Muslims.

AUGUST 18

Sunday the third day of Calcutta's harrowing ordeal has not seen any appreciable abatement of the crisis. Last night saw some large-scale clashes, both in North and South Calcutta. More than 900 calls came for the fire brigade throughout the day.

Cold Blooded Murders

From Saturday looting was supplemented by cold-blooded murders. In the Muslim area of Park Circus many cases of murder of Hindus in their own houses were reported. And in Ballygunge's Hindu neighbourhood I have seen with my own eyes Muslims done to death without provocation.

The extent of loot, apart from arson, is feared to be much greater than at first estimated: it must easily be worth over one crore rupees. As for casualties, the number of deaths have rapidly gone up and many very well exceed 500.

Feeling of mass hysteria was not manifest today but cases of murder were piling up. Even a women's hospital in Alipore was threatened. Gruelling stories of torture are also coming of limbs torn apart, living human beings thrown from the third floor of buildings. And along come wild rumours which are making things worse. Many still marooned include Fazlul Huq and Congress leader Ashrafuddin.

Reports from the working-class belt indicate that hysterical frenzy has not yet contaminated the workers and murder and arson have not yet spread there: the jute belt from Hajinagar, Kankinarah is reported quiet and so are Kidderpore and Matiabruz. At Narkeldanga a joint Hindu-Muslim squad of railway workers was still working.

Governor's Homily

On Saturday night military pickets were posted in many parts of Calcutta and armed pickets were patrolling the streets. Governor Burrows in a broadcast gave a homily: "It is discreditable that on the eve of self-government, the largest city in India should be victim of mob rule." The sound of frequent shoutings at night could be heard with shouts of "Jai Hind" and "Allah o Akbar" alternatively.

Scaldah Station out of action, not one newspaper except the *Statesman* and *Ananda Bazar Patrika*, post offices closed, streets filled with refuse, street lights unlit, closed shops, markets closed; trams, buses, schools, colleges closed, even telegrams not delivered.

Signs of Returning Life

But from Sunday noon signs of returning life are dimly visible; first was the opening of *pakori-bhaji* vendors' shops in the Esplanade, and second was the news that at Maulali Darga local Hindus and Muslims met, and after talks a joint peace procession with Congress, League and white flags shouting "Hindu Muslim ek ho" came out on the street.

There is also the report of a Hindu sadhu in Burra Bazar giving shelter to six Muslims. But he was soon spotted and had to save himself from mad fury.

Communist Krishna Binode Roy and his family were rescued to safety by a Muslim landlord.

But there is yet a long way to go before anything like normal existence is possible in Calcutta.

AUGUST 19

During the last two days we have been able to go round many parts of the city and get an idea of the appalling horror of what has happened in Calcutta.

In Wellington Street, Harrison Road, Chittaranjan Avenue, Russa Road, corpses in gruesome state were found strewn along the way; among them were those of old men and the tender innocent kids defaced and battered.

Gruesome Atrocities

In many places, houses were set on fire with inhabitants inside and at other places residents were murdered wholesale. The Gharpar University Hostel was attacked and six students—except only one who had stayed behind—were hacked to death. In Mirzapore Street, one entire family of 17 was killed.

In Bhowanipore dead bodies tied together by rope were found on the street.

In Ballygunge the whole bustee has been gutted and one inhabitant of the bustee went back with a rescue party and found the whole bustee demolished and dead bodies littered the place and it was with difficulty that a man who had nearly lost his head could be snatched away from the place.

Cases of cold-blooded butchery we have personally seen: on Gariahata Road in broad daylight groups of people armed with rods and lathis killed unprovoked passing individuals as

you kill rats. Today there is no such thing as humanity or civilisation left in this wide city, there is just insane lust for blood that has overpowered men.

Political Leaders Meet

When the leaders of various parties met on Sunday in a conference, the idea of joint peace squads, though appreciated by all, was not regarded as practicable and there was an overwhelming demand for more armed pickets to crush mob rule.

Hospitals are full and there is no accommodation for more wounded; cases admitted reveal horrible tortures were inflicted on them; there was an old woman over 70 with stabs on the breasts, skull broken and then incised and lacerated with knives. Everywhere you see heartrending scenes of devastated families. I visited a number of thanas each of which is packed with refugees who have turned complete destitutes.

Warring Zones

Calcutta today is divided virtually into so many warring zones of Hindus and Muslims and hardly any link remains between one zone and the other. The only people today who move about with impunity are the White Sahibs.

Military pickets are moving in the affected areas and also rescuing the people from danger zone. A Government spokesman says that more than 10,000 have been rescued from one zone to the other but many more have been evacuated by nonofficial relief bodies and by individuals.

Bankim Mukerji with a group of Communists has been miraculously rescued.

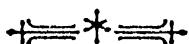
Colossal Death Roll

The death roll according to the *Statesman* is between 2000 and 3000 though other sources think that it may be 5000.

Material losses unbelievable, and worst victims are petty shopkeepers, market vendors and city poor.

The Chief Secretary to the Government of Bengal today said that the situation in North Calcutta is now definitely under control. He said that the city was divided into six zones for the purposes of health as conservancy is precarious but could not say when the work would begin in view of lack of hands. Trams would be running from this evening while lorry transport for Government offices would start on Tuesday.

The whole city is eagerly and desperately waiting for the first definite signs of a return to normalcy. For even in the midst of the all imposing edifices of civilisation Calcutta is yet the ghost city where the savage rules and the man has fled.



11. Views of Muslim Congress Workers on Causes of Communalism

Extracts from a letter by Golam Kader Choudhury, a Congress worker, to Jawaharlal Nehru; Dacca, 25 August 1946. File No. P-5; All India Congress Committee Papers (1946); Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

*Dacca,
25 August 1946.*

Revered Panditjee,

Now you are Rastrapati [President, AICC] and so you are in power to do many things. The first and foremost of which is to remove such things from the Congress, which pains the Muslims working under your banner. There are two reasons—one is religious. You know that the fundamental root of Islam is “the Unity of Allah,” ... the word “Bande Matram” itself means ... worship of the motherland, there are in the song verses like “Tong Hi Durga Dasha Prahirini Dharini”, “Tomari Protima Gai Mandiray Mandiray”, etc., all are the verses of idolatry, so this is against the fundamental root of Islam. Secondly, I hope you will remember that I wrote you a letter in February or March 1946, that this song reminds every Hindoo to hate Mussalmans. (I am telling about Bengal). The author of this song, [the] late Bankim Chandra Chatterjee, in one of his works named *Ananda Math*, excited the Hindus (Santans), and they took oath before the image of Kali singing “Bande Mataram” to destroy Mussalman community. He, in his work, described the Mussalman as monkey, *mlechcha* and such other insulting names.

I can't understand why Mahatmajee is showing so much zid [stubbornness] to keep “Bande Mataram” intact, when there are slogans like “Jai Hind” and song like “Quadam Quadam Barhaye Ja” which is [are] cosmopolitan and national in character and it does [they do] not wound the feeling of any religious community. On the contrary, every Indian who has got slight sense of humanity and is not a paid slave of British Imperialism shall feel proud of this song and slogans.

I am always marking that many writings of Mahatmajee wound the feelings of other religious communities, such as his expression of creating “Ram Raj” and asking the volunteers to recite “Ram Nam”. (Why is he not in favour of having any religious community other than Hindus in the Volunteer Corps?)

Every possible attempt should be taken against the League Ministry and the Governor of Bengal, responsible for the inhuman action of Calcutta....

Some two months ago at the reception of S. J. Purna Chandra Das, a mosque was damaged and the Holy Quoran desecrated and burnt down. Purna Babu went then to take garland of honour and purse, but he had not the courage to face the trouble. Instead of trying to suppress he cowardly [sic] ran away from the place and ultimately left Dacca, of course through the efforts of Congress and League....

Just yesterday, when Congress and League secretaries were trying to pacify the people so that the wave of Calcutta may not reach up to Dacca, they were disappointed. At about 10 p.m. some Hindus of Nawabpur, where no Mussalman resides, [in a] cowardly [fashion] and without any cause of action, besieged one Muslim and when he attempted to run away, he was stabbed in his back, and thus gave a new start to another [round of] hooliganism at Dacca....

In conclusion, I beg to say that the dangerous germ for spreading this disease in the body of nation is the communal electorate, and at any cost the germ should be destroyed forever.

I am confident enough that nothing will come of the Constituent Assembly. This is another dodge of British Parliament and the present outbreak of riots is the outcome of their foul play.

However, as good cometh from evil, you may at least save India from the curse of communal electorate[s] through the Constituent Assembly, and if you can do this much then it will be your great achievement. (Provided that there will be a joint electorate only with reservation of seats on population basis but no weightage of any kind). When our path will be clear of any obstacle, communalism and communal riots will disappear. (Let there be class war, no harm, and it is inevitable, but communal riots and communal feelings must go). This communal electorate is [the] life blood of communalism, vide Mr Fenner Brockway's *Indian Crisis*. We maintain separate electorate[s] in order to keep the different communities segregate[d] according to their religious beliefs[s], and [provide] the temptation to the candidates to appeal to the voters through their religious sentiments....

Yours sincerely,
G.K. Choudhury.

12. League Ministry Blamed for Inaction

Extracts from news report, 'League leaders responsible for calcutta's carnage'. *Hindustan Times*, 26 August 1946.

New Delhi, Sunday. The impression gathered from a number of responsible persons who have reached here from Calcutta is that the Muslim League leaders created the necessary atmosphere for the riot and that the League Ministry utterly failed to give protection to law-abiding citizens. They further point out that it was only when the Governor, Sir Frederick Burrows, took the situation in his own hand that conditions improved.

A serious charge made by the Hindu and Sikh residents is that the Chief Minister, Mr Suhrawardy, installed himself at the Police Headquarters and took control of the police force in his own hand. This gave the impression that any call for help from Muslims was immediately attended to but similar calls from Hindu victims were ignored. How otherwise can the fact be explained that both on Friday and Saturday the mob indulged unchecked in arson and loot on a colossal scale.

The Governor, brought up in the traditions of parliamentary government, thought he would be acting unconstitutionally if he interfered with the Ministry. There are some who criticize him for this attitude during the first 30 hours. But when the Governor realised that the situation had gone out of control, he stepped in and effectively directed the military forces to quell the disturbances. He must have heard from public men who saw him how Mr Suhrawardy and his associates, when they were told that looting was on, remarked that "this is only the beginning." He must have also heard how the Communists were backing the breakers of law and order and siding with Mr Suhrawardy in producing a state of anarchy.

Whatever the factors which made the Governor act, his intervention did ease [ease] the situation and by 19th the military had established full control. Everyone praises the military forces for having acted firmly and impartially....



13. Heroic Harmony Efforts

News report, 'Workers' and common man's heroism against fratricidal war'. The parenthesis passage at the beginning of the report is an editorial comment by the newspaper. *People's Age*, 1 September 1946.

(We are proud to print this brief report from our Calcutta correspondent.

When communal mania gripped the people of Calcutta there were ordinary common folk who held their heads high, clenched their fists, fought and became heroes.

The mania which seized Calcutta was no ordinary frenzy. We have got reports of headless corpses being taken in procession. Our correspondent has seen human heads being paraded through the streets—stuck at the end of swords and spears. He has seen young boys nailed to a mast and taken out in a procession of unspeakable brutality. He has seen children being thrown out of four-storey high buildings onto the streets below. Fiends have hacked the little dead corpses to pieces.

He has seen innocent people die because they were giving shelter to refugees. They were supplied with poisoned milk. And more ... much more....

Against such devilishness let loose from hell, the glorious organised working-class of Calcutta stood firm as rock! Hindu and Muslim workers fought together against all fiendishness. The Muslim worker stood up against Muslim mobs. The Hindu worker held back riotous Hindu mobs.

The main labour belt around Calcutta stood firm and encircled the riot.

But in the thick of the riot were little islands of heroism. There were the tramway workers—both Hindu and Muslim—whose glory can never fade. There were also humble householders, shopkeepers, middle-class folks—who never flinched.

All Glory To Calcutta's Nameless Heroes! Never Again This Mutual Slaughter! The Forces Of Life Will Win Over The Forces Of Death!)

Calcutta, Aug. 25. Even amidst the insane carnage that drowned Calcutta in four terrible days come to light many instances of silent heroism which put together bring rays of hope and confidence despite the prevailing gloom.

First of all comes the splendid record of the organised working-class. It was they who despite their acute differences with the League, had, in many case, declared hartal to maintain the solidarity of the working-class and not to let Hindu and Muslim workers fall apart.

Thus the Tram Workers' Union decided to go on strike on the 16th and thereby helped to minimise the chances of disturbances.

In the industrial belt of Hooghly District, the Congress Committee issued a printed appeal asking the workers "to bring about the solidarity of the workers belonging to all communities by keeping the factories closed on the 16th."

Similarly, railway, textile, and other sections of workers were the only people who on their own initiative fought to guard against the communal war beforehand.

Working-class Stands Firm

When, however, August 16 actually brought in its trail murder and loot, the organised working-class kept away from it. In the whole vast jute-belt flames of fratricidal war could not spread.

The dock-workers, seamen, trams, gas, textile workers, in a body stayed away from it and maintained their solidarity.

Of all working-class areas only Metiabruz was seriously involved in the riot, but here it was not the workers but the local population, mostly tailors, who were drawn into the turmoil and the workers were mostly put on the defensive and even then they did not participate in looting.

On August 19, when Sjt. Mrinal Kanti Bose, President of AITUC, stated, "The working-class I know as a whole kept itself away from this turmoil," he was not making an empty claim.

Fighting the Flames

Not only that. They intervened at many places to put out the flames that raged all round.

In Tittaghur, Hindu and Muslim workers brought out a joint peace procession.

In Budge Budge, Hindu and Muslim workers held a public meeting and pledged to stand firm against riots.

In Kidderpore, seamen and port-workers refused to join in communal clashes and helped rescue work.

In Narkeldanga, B&A Railway workers raised Hindu-Muslim volunteers to keep peace.

Never Tiljala, 200 Hindus and Muslims living together, many of whom work in Heatley, Gresam and other factories, decided on the first day that it was their own duty to keep peace and they did so.

Ultadanga is very near to one of the raging centres of disturbance. But in certain areas of Ultadanga could be seen festoons notifying "Peaceful areas for Hindus and Muslims", and in these localities workers of the Lily Biscuit Co, Dakshindari Jute Mill, continued normal work despite dislocation as everywhere.

Gas-workers living in one of the very centres of mob violence at Rajabazar tried to save many in distress and themselves as a body abstained from hooliganism.

Tramway Workers' Glory

But the most glorious was the record of the tram workers, Calcutta's proudest Union under the Red flag.

In many areas the tram workers even when left alone tried heroically to stop looting which was almost an impossible job in the prevailing temper.

Hindus and Muslims in many cases not only lived together but even refused to part when the rescue parties came to pick Muslims from Hindu areas and Hindus from Muslim areas.

And it was their heroic intervention together with some Muslim students, which saved the Victoria Institute Hostel for girls on the Upper Circular Road from being looted.

Besides the workers, there were many individual cases of heroism which created almost a saga for Calcutta: in bustees as well as in middle-class localities, these cases actually happened side by side with gruesome butchery and looting.

Common Man's Heroism

In Burra Bazar one Hindustani sadhu gave shelter to nine Muslims. A Hindu mob raided his house, killed three Muslims, and seriously wounded the sadhu, but could not spot the other six Muslims whom the sadhu continued to give secret shelter even after the raid.

The Tower Lodge Boarding House in Mirzapore was attacked by a Muslim mob but one Muslim boarder boldly faced them saying, "You cannot raid this place without killing me;" and another Muslim boarder challenged, "If you have to loot then loot my room first."

One Hindu postmaster in North Calcutta saved the family of his Muslim postman by risking his own life resisting a Hindu crowd.

Three hundred *mochis* (shoemakers) in Baithak Khana area saved the life of a group of Hindu tram workers.

In Goabagan, North Calcutta, one old Brahmin stood blocking the lane leading into a small Muslim bustee in a dominantly Hindu locality and thundered against the Hindu mob that they could enter the Muslim bustee only over his dead body.

Later when the Muslims were evacuated he was threatened but he refused to leave the place saying that it would be admitting defeat.

Similarly, reports from Belgachia, Park Circus and Central Calcutta give many instances of Muslims coming forward to defend and shelter Hindu families hunted by Muslim mobs.

In many cases when the fury increased these brave men—many of them are just honest householders—risked their own lives and reached these Hindu families to safety or police protection. Some Muslim Leaguers could be seen at this job.

So also in Hindu localities in Shambazar, Bhowanipore and Ballygunge there were numerous cases of Muslims getting shelter in Hindu homes and being rescued to safety from the clutches of Hindu mobs. In this work I found many Congress and Communist worker working side by side.

Here it may be noted that mob fury had grown to such an unbelievable extent that those who were found giving shelter became the target of mob attacks and their lives were endangered.

Thus even when the distressed were rescued by the police or the military, many such Hindus and Muslims who risked their lives to honour fraternal ties between Hindus and Muslims were threatened with death by men of their own communities.

There were many instances of Hindus and Muslims in *bhadrak* localities standing up to the mob violence. I shall end by quoting what happened in our own locality:

Joint Defence

At Garcha Road, Ballygunge, Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs held a joint meeting and decided to guard the entire area by volunteers to prevent outside mobs from penetrating; Hindus to resist Hindu mobs, Muslims to resist Muslim mobs invading.

But on the 18th there was a tense crisis everywhere and they jointly decided to evacuate Muslims to safety which was done the next day. But even then the mosque in the area is still kept safe.

Across Gariahat Road in Ballygunge Place, I found Prof. Niren Roy openly giving shelter to a number of Muslim workers in face of a infuriated Hindu crowd, and himself stood guard until they were rescued to safety.

Another professor, Dr Tarak Das of Anthropology Department, Calcutta University, himself barred the way to a Hindu mob trying to loot the house of Dr Ahmed.

Thus even amidst the ruin and devastation of Calcutta there were people who refused to let patriotism be destroyed and who declared by their deeds that life must assert itself against death.

14. The Blame for the Spread of Communalism

Article, 'Communal war an imperialist conspiracy against Indian freedom'. *People's Age*, 1 September 1946.

The blood-curdling events of Calcutta come as a great warning to all fighters for freedom. For four days, from August 16, Calcutta was in the grip of the worst communal frenzy. Murder, loot, arson were rife in the city, perpetrated not only by hooligans, but by ordinary men.

Sense of common slavery, pity—in short all sense of decency—seemed to have disappeared. Houses with inmates inside were set on fire. Women were raped and killed; children were thrown from houses on to the streets and speared to death; heads of the slain were victoriously carried by the murderers in broad daylight.

All the atrocities and sadistic outrages perpetrated by the British masters in the last two hundred years were repeated by the slaves on their fellow slaves—on their own brothers and sisters.

More than 3000 innocent people were killed; over 10,000 wounded.

Who were killed? Those killed—Hindus and Muslims—were common men from the middle and poorer classes—men who would have been proud to lay down their lives in the common struggle for freedom. Those who killed them were also ordinary men who any day would consider it a privilege to sacrifice their lives for the common cause of Indian freedom. That is the tragedy of Calcutta.

A Fortnight Ago—and Now

Only a few months ago, the streets and pavements of Calcutta were red with the blood of Hindus and Muslims in the common fight against the British for the release of the INA soldiers. Hindus and Muslims sacrificed their lives on the barricades, boldly facing the British armoured cars with a death-defying spirit.

Only a fortnight ago, Calcutta demonstrated on July 29th unity of the Hindus and Muslims, when 15 lakhs came out on a protest strike to support the postmen's strike. Hindu and Muslim workers, middle-class employees, clerks, students—all joined hands against the policy of the Government of India.

Muslim League volunteers kept the Ministers away from work and the European sahibs were shown their place that day.

Before the demonstration of this united might of the citizens of Calcutta, the forces of Government had to retreat: not one policeman nor one soldier dared show his face to the streets. The city was in the hands of the people, solidly united for a common cause.

Whose Responsibility

Who was responsible then for this sudden transformation of Calcutta into a boiling pot of communal frenzy? Who hatched this murderous plot against a whole people and how did the people fall a victim to it?

Workers, citizens, the events of Calcutta constitute the culminating point of the imperialist policy of 'divide and rule;' of the policies of the two political parties which continually disrupt the forces of national unity.

The gathering momentum of mass struggles beginning with the INA demonstrations and the armed mutiny of the Naval ratings have revealed to imperialism that India can no longer be governed unless her own people are divided into warring camps—each seeking the help of the British against the other.

The Cabinet Mission's plan, while it seeks alliance with the Princes and other vested interests, exploits the Congress-League differences to divide the people; to stem the tide of revolution and force the two organisations to rely on British strength and awards. It forces each party to mobilise its following not against the British, but against each other, thus preparing the country for internecine mass conflicts.

Imperialist Conspiracy

The policy of 'divide and rule' today means civil war between Hindus and Muslims—civil war which is often referred to by the leaders of the Congress and the League—civil war in which Indian women and children are killed, while European bosses continue to rule over all as before.

On whom does imperialism rely to execute its plan of 'divide and rule'? In all shame it must be admitted that it is the policies pursued by the leaderships of the two main organisations, of the Congress and the League, on which imperialism relies to carry through its plan of a civil war.

How well did the imperialist plot succeed! As soon as it became known that British imperialism was coming to terms with the National Congress leadership on the question of the Interim Government, the reactionary leadership of the League gave a call for "direct action" and fixed August 16 as the day to symbolise it.

League's Direct Action

During the many upheavals which India has seen, the League leadership has not even once given a call for 'direct action' and joined the common struggle for freedom.

The League leadership which claims to represent the 100 million Muslims of India dared not give a call for 'direct action' when three million people, the majority of whom were Muslim peasants, died in the Bengal famine of 1943. It dared not lift its voice against the imperialist masters in defence of the Muslim peasant.

When the heroic people of Kashmir—90 per cent of whom are Muslims, and the most oppressed Muslims—rose against the tyrannical Maharaja—the League leadership would neither support them nor give a call for 'direct action'.

The League leadership opposed the common struggle of railway workers against the Government of India and today does nothing to protect the Muslim peasant of the Punjab from the Muslim landlord.

In whose interest then was its present call for 'direct action' given and for what purpose?

Muslim Masses Trapped

The call for observing August 16 was a call to enforce the imperialist constitution, 'to rescue the British from the clutches of the Congress', to pursue the game of power politics—the game of Muslim vested interests against the Congress—not a call for fight against the British. It was a call for securing British help against the Congress, against the Hindus. It was a call which exactly suited the interests of British imperialism.

No doubt, the Muslim masses were told it was a *jehad* against the British—but that was to hoodwink them. In fact, the Muslim masses were trapped by the vested interests into a communal conflict and used by them as cat's-paw to play their own game of securing a compromise with British imperialism and seeking its aid against the Congress.

The Muslim League leadership by pursuing a policy of inciting its following against the Hindus, by deliberately screening the common struggle for power and by giving a call for action against the Congress, lent itself as an instrument for executing the imperialist policy of civil strife.

On the other side, the policy of compromise with British imperialism, pursued by the leadership of the National Congress, plays straight into imperialist hands.

Congress Policy

The imperialist power can be knocked out today in a single mighty blow if the Congress calls for a joint struggle of Hindus and Muslims on a platform which brings all together. Not all the imperialist might would be of any use against such a powerful and decisive blow.

But just when the people are in a position to give a knock out blow for real freedom, the Congress leadership accepts a worthless tinsel of power and compromises with the British Government.

The price of that compromise is disruption of the revolutionary forces; the price of that compromise is accentuation of communal conflicts. For when the Congress leadership, instead of leading a common struggle which unites Hindus and Muslims, goes for compromise, it is forced to rely on imperialism to subdue and fight the League and intensify the forces of civil conflict.

Disruption

The entire policy of the Congress leadership in recent years has been one which puts every obstacle in the way of the common Muslim joining the common struggle and thus enables communal leadership to secure a hold over him.

Its alliance with Indian vested interests forces it to range itself against the struggle of the peasant against the landlord—a struggle in which Hindu and Muslim peasants come to common consciousness.

Its opposition to strikes against the common struggle of the Hindu and Muslim workers and behind the interests of the capitalists.

Its support to the feudal Princes compels it to take a lukewarm attitude towards the struggle of the Muslim masses in States like Kashmir.

Its policy thus continually disrupt common consciousness and enables the Muslim communalists to continue their hold over the Muslim masses.

That policy reaches its culmination in the present period when it goes in for compromise with the British and hopes to beat down the League with their aid.

Instead of working for a voluntary union of India, it relies on compulsory union under a British-made constitution, and thus offers an opportunity to the League leadership to incite the Muslim masses against the Hindus. By its refusal to accept the right of self-determination for cultural, linguistic and homogeneous units, which alone would knock out the reactionary cry of separatism, it enables the League leadership to feed the fires of communalism.

Face to face with its own bankruptcy, in solving the problem of national unity, it denounces the Muslim League in a manner which only alienates the Muslim masses and incites its own following against the Muslim masses themselves.

Instead of giving a joint call for a struggle of Hindus and Muslims on a platform which will draw both together, it prepares the ground for permanent conflicts.

Congress Interim Govt

The danger of riots grows acute with the installation of the Congress Interim Government. The dire anti-national results of the policy of compromise will become evident if the Muslim League leadership again gives such calls and the Congress Governments are forced to use British military—against the Muslim masses.

The same leadership which demanded the withdrawal of British troops in 1942, would now be calling them to its aid, as Sarat Bose has already done, to maintain its sham power and authority.

What could be more ironical, more disgraceful than this 'power and authority' which relies on the British to keep order, because it cannot unite its own masses and people?

Workers, citizens, the Calcutta riot is not the last of the riots. India's hungry millions have yet to go through many a fiery ordeal—the worst among them will be orgies like that of Calcutta.

Greetings

Who can defeat this plot but the masses of India.

The Communist Party of India greets the heroic working-class of Calcutta, the brave tramway workers, railway and jute, bidi and engineering workers—Hindus and Muslims—who stood firm, remembered the bond forged through many a class battle, fought the flames of communal warfare and kept the working-class away from it.

Glory to the workers who kept alive the tradition of Red flag—of class unity, of national unity for freedom.

The oppressed workers of Calcutta have given a fitting reply to the splitters of peoples' unity.

The Communist Party greets all those men from the working and middle-class—Hindus and Muslims—who recognised the common bond and saved many a life from mob fury.

We honour all those martyrs who fought the mobs of their own community to save brothers belonging to the other community—those Hindus who lost their lives saving Muslims and those Muslims who sacrificed themselves to save Hindus. They recognised the common bond, so easily snapped by the leaderships. They remained true to the salt of the motherland—heroic sons of our enslaved country.

Weapon of Civil War

Workers and Citizens, in the coming critical days, the weapon of bloody riots, of civil war among the enslaved people of India, will be more and more utilised to break the common movement and the bond of solidarity that unites workers and workers, Hindus and Muslims, Indians and Indians.

It will be used because imperialism is seized with panic at the rapid growth of the revolutionary forces of the working-class and peasantry—which are rising to challenge it in a final battle.

Repeated attempts will be made to use the communal weapon to disrupt the struggle against the imperialist plan, and give a safe passage to it with the aid of British awards.

It will be systematically used to disrupt the strike-struggles of the workers, who if united are for the first time strong enough to knock out better living conditions from the profiteering Indian and European employers.

It will be used against the common struggles of the Hindu and Muslim peasants who have already given quit notices to landlords and moneylenders.

Communal riot, civil war, is the conspiracy of imperialism against the people; of Indian vested interest against the workers' and peasants' struggles.

The Policies pursued by the two leaderships continually aid and abet this conspiracy.

It is for the workers, for all honest citizens, to defeat these policies and this conspiracy.

All Together

Let every worker remember that every riot that breaks out only helps the capitalist to enforce wage-cuts and unemployment.

Every division among Hindu and Muslim peasants keeps landlordism alive—helping Hindu and Muslim landlords to fatten at the expense of the peasants.

Every division among the masses keeps the hated imperialist rule alive.

Raise your voice, therefore, in common protest against the imperialist plan; raise your voice against the policies of the two leaderships and warn the people against them!

Announce to imperialism your firm determination to forge an iron unity in the ranks of the people and warn that any playing with people's lives, any sacrifice of Indian lives, will not be tolerated by the Indian people!

Let the vested interests—the Indian Princes, landlords and capitalists—know that no longer shall we set fire to our own houses, kill our own brothers, and thus help to safeguard their profit and loot.

Cease to be Pawns

Let the two leaderships know that no longer shall we oblige them and play with our own lives, lives of our women and children; no longer shall we submit to being used as pawns in the dirty and selfish game of power-politics—of two groups of vested interests!

And finally let imperialism know that no matter what sacrifices have to be made, no matter how many lives may be lost—the Indian workers, the Indian people, are determined to defeat the incendiaries who set Indian homes on fire.

They are determined to march forward to a real Constituent Assembly based on adult suffrage and self-determination, a Constituent Assembly fully empowered and sovereign, the authoritative voice of Indian freedom.

The power of the Indian people is invincible. It can defeat every conspiracy against freedom, throw out all splitters of unity—and wrest independence from the hands of imperialism.

15. Direct Action Day in Bengal

Extracts from Paragraphs for Monthly Summary for the Cabinet; 15 September 1946. File No. 5/12/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Bengal (First and Second Halves of August)

1. Police were forced to open fire on the 8th August at Narayanganj in self-defence against an attack by Hindus who had been served with an injunction not to erect a *jhulan puja pandal* in an area in front of the Fakirtola mosque. Three Hindus were reported to have sustained bullet wounds of which two were serious.

2. In Dankara district an attempt was made by some Santhals to dispossess by force the rightful Hindu owners of land formerly held by Santhals. The special officer for aboriginals took necessary action.

3. Demonstrations on Direct Action Day in Calcutta quickly degenerated into a communal riot of the worst type. The disturbances which took the form of sporadic rioting, murder, looting and arson began at 7 a.m. on the morning of the 16th August and gradually spread during the day of those parts of the city where Hindus and Muslim *paras* or *Mahallas* adjoin. The situation during the 16th was not held to require the employment of the military though a battalion was asked to stand by during the evening. The situation further degenerated during the 17th, 18th and 19th was not brought finally under control till the 20th by which date nine

battalions were operating in support of the civil power in Calcutta. From that day onwards the improvement in the situation was marked.

As a result of the disturbances 4370 persons were admitted to the hospitals for treatment between the 16th and 28th August. It will never be possible to give a final figure for the casualties during the disturbances but a figure of 4000 killed and 10,000 injured is probably not far wide off the mark.

4. In 24 Parganas communal trouble arose as a result of the Direct Action Day demonstrations in the Matiaburj area adjoining Calcutta. One hundred and sixty persons are reported to have been killed and 296 injured.

5. In Howrah also there were disturbances. Total casualties reported are 150 killed and 381 injured.

6. In Dacca trouble started on the night of the 20-21st and the total casualties were 22 killed and 75 injured.

7. In Chittagong the figures are 4 killed, 45 admissions to hospitals and 25 outdoor patients.

16. Instances of Communal Harmony During Riots in Calcutta

Article, 'Those who fought to save brothers', by Nikhil Chakravarty. The parenthesised comments preceding the article are by the editor of the newspaper. *People's Age*, 15 September 1946.

(Two weeks ago we published a despatch from our Calcutta correspondent narrating instances of rare heroism on the part of the workers and the common people in fighting flames of fratricidal war in Calcutta. Here is a further instalment of the same undying saga which shows that the greatness of our people both Hindu and Muslim, can never be destroyed despite all the bloody carnage into which the country is plunged by the policies that our leaders pursue.—Editor).

As Calcutta slowly returns to normalcy, there is being salvaged out of the appalling wreck a treasure of precious gold: it is the heroic deeds of men and women who, amidst savage butchery all around, refused to let brother fight brother. In some cases, they banded themselves into groups, while at other places they fought single handed, risking their very lives.

In Tollygunge, where 6000 Hindus and Muslims have lived together for generations, August 16 saw the invasion of mob fury. The same night a bustee, a little way off, was set on fire, but the people of the locality rushed to put it out.

A peace Brigade of 800 Hindus and Muslims was formed, which split itself up into 18 squads and kept day and night vigil against all attacks and provocations and rumours from outside, and fostered peace and harmony among all.

On the 17th, a Muslim bustee was attacked by an outside mob, but the volunteers, many of them Hindus, rushed and warded off repeated attacks.

The same day, when the military opened indiscriminate fire, this Muslim bustee gave shelter to 150 Hindus. In the afternoon, a joint meeting was called, 4500 people turned up, but Section 144 prevented the meeting, though everybody went back determined to save peace.

Joint Peace Committee

In Linton Street, a joint peace committee of Hindus and Muslims was formed, but a goonda group from outside attacked a Siva temple in the area. Muslim brothers came forward and got

wounded while defending this temple. The temple was thus saved and goondas could only loot a few shops on their way back.

In Manicktola, where started the first clash of August 16, the whole area was plunged into a regular battle. The same night, however, local leaders got together, and the next morning could be seen a small procession of Congress, League and Communist workers with their own flags shouting 'Hindu-Muslim Ek Ho'.

Temperers were high then and many resisted. But the peace squad was also the Defence Committee of the locality, which warded off over a dozen attacks from outside in course of a day.

As the tension subsided, they at once took up the work of providing relief to the homeless. A fine record of service since the cloth agitation of 1945 led them on to this new work at the height of the storm.

Shrimati Barna Kumari Debi, the 93-year old surviving sister of Tagore, was living at the Muslim-dominated locality of Entally. When things became menacing on the night of the 16th, Haji Mohd. Yusuff, the Corporation Councillor next door, and Sheikh Saluddin, Secretary of the local Anjuman School, at once set out to rescue Hindus, between two to three thousand of whom were saved, many having been housed in the Anjuman School.

Next day, Haji Sahib himself gave Barna Kumari Debi and her family shelter in his own house. For five days they stayed on defended by the Muslims and it was on the 23rd that a Muslim hackney carriage driver risked his own life to reach them to a Hindu area of North Calcutta.

In a letter to the Press, Barna Kumari Debi's grandson has acknowledged their gratitude to the Mussalmans of the area.

Professor Risks Life

In Ballygunge, Prof. Nirmal Bhattacharyya rescued a wounded Muslim from a Hindu mob and even when his house was besieged gave him shelter, tended to his wounds and arranged for his removal to hospital.

A few Muslim families were marooned in Dover Lane, Ballygunge, for two days, and the police did not bother to protect them despite repeated SOS's. It was only a group of schoolboys with lathis who defended them all through, so that the Muslims eventually refused to go away and stayed on.

In Park Circus, Mr Rehman, an old Muslim gentleman, fought with an infuriated mob for more than an hour and saved 36 out of a family of 39 Hindus, and moved them to safety.

A Swamiji of a famous Hindu ashram in Calcutta, preferring to remain anonymous, risked his life at the hands of a mob while he saved 12 Muslims.

A rescue squad organised by the ISD Employees' Association reports an unforgettable story: "We reached Bhukailas Road, Kidderpore, within a couple of hours of a large-scale massacre. A Muslim boy, 12 year old, ran up and stopped our moving car and whispered in haste—"We have kept many Hindus in hiding. Follow us quick." Within a few yards, he signalled us to open a manhole, underneath which we rescued two Hindus.

"He next beckoned us to a drain behind a mosque, from where we rescued six people.

"Next, entering a narrow lane, the boy quickly looked round and dropped a key at our feet and whispered 'Open that shop door', inside which we found a Hindu doctor's family.

"Little further, he pointed to another door, on opening which we found a Muslim girl of about 26 years, bandaging four wounded Hindus tearing portions from her own sari.

"In this way, with the help of a group of boys and girls all between 12 and 16, and also of a local Imam, we could rescue 114 lives in a few hours."

Workers' Trail of Glory

More stories of tram workers' heroism are available: in Park Circus, about 40 Hindu tram workers were guarded by Muslim tram workers against a huge Muslim mob for three days when they were rescued to safety. The Hindu tram workers paid it back in Ballygunge, where Muslim tram workers were protected by their Hindu comrades dressing them up as Brahmins.

In Kidderpore, the story of the Seamen's Union keeping away from rioting is already told.

But the next day, they brought out a peace squad along with tram and the Brooke Bond Tea Company workers. Joining up with another local peace squad, they, while shouting "Hindu-Muslim Ek Ho", faced attacks from mobs.

Big Crowds Pacified

In Ibrahim Road, they even succeeded in pacifying a crowd of over 1000, but soon after the military came and started indiscriminate shooting which made it impossible for them to move about. But they did as far as possible to keep the peace of the area.

At the other end of the city, the jute workers of Alam Bazar from the very beginning pledged themselves to save their bustees, housing both Hindus and Muslims.

A local committee was formed with local Congress and League leaders together with the Communist workers on the 17th. But the same night, outsiders started trouble, and peace was broken.

But the Hindu and Muslim workers showed remarkable unity: keeping away from riot, they again brought out a peace squad in which both Hindu and Muslim workers participated and faced attacks in course of which Raghunath and Hanif were wounded.

The 700 strikers of the Standard Pharmaceutical Company kept away from rioting, and began helping the People's Relief Committee centre for the homeless and the distressed.

Similarly the 300 strikers of the National Tannery did not join the rioting: instead they hoisted the Red flag on the factory gate, and one worker commented: "Red flag is guarding our factory, and that is why this riot could not touch our workers."

A worker of the Bengal Pottery said: "Our Union had warned us, that is why we did not go in for this riot."

Many of them, however, suffered heavily, as rioters had burnt down to ashes one of the workers' bustees, which made 22 families homeless. A worker leader remarked: "Those who started the riot suffered no loss, while we suffered both with our lives and all that we had."

At a Rescue Home in Ballygunge, Communist Nani Bhowmick interviewed a Hindu postman who had to flee from a Muslim area. But he would not talk about his own loss, worrying all the time about the Muslim workers—"Will they be with us now? We may have to strike again, but our unity, will we have it back?"

"We Have Our Union"

As if in answer to this query comes the story from a Muslim Rescue Centre in Park Circus where Communist Ghulam Quddus met a number of Muslim workers of the Brooke Bond Tea Co and Joya Engineering works, anxious to get back to work. "But," asked Quddus, "there are Hindu workers inside, how can you work together now?" Swift came the reply from them, "Inside we have got our Union."

Murder and hate possessed Calcutta, but they could not break the granite unity of the toilers born out of years of struggle together.

Such stories may not strike the headlines today, but it is they who will build a new and greater Bengal tomorrow—and not the leaders who even after all that has happened refuse to leave their respective paths, strewn with the corpses of our own brothers.

17. Leaguers Attack Communists in Chittagong

Extracts from a news report, 'Direct Action destroys Hindu-Muslim unity'. *People's Age*, 15 September 1946.

Chittagong, September 3. The League's 'Direct Action' in the overwhelmingly Muslim district of Chittagong was marked by a full blast attack on the Communist Party.

On the 16th August, there was complete hartal in Chittagong town as also in the villages, even Hindus closed their shops partly in terror and partly in sympathy. Realising the extreme tension prevailing, the Communist Party appealed for the maintenance of peace, urging the Hindus not to be provoked and the Muslims to direct their struggle against the British.

The same evening a huge meeting of 50,000 was addressed by the local League Secretary, Fazlul Quader Chaudhury, who made a bitter communal speech which alarmed the Hindus present at the meeting.

A procession of several thousands then went round the town shouting, "Down with the Congress! Down with the Communist Party!"

Fury Against Communists

Next day, on the 17th, the Muslims attacked and broke up a meeting called by the Congress Socialist Party, and Ram Manohar Lohia, who was the principal speaker, had to take shelter in a nearby house. The crowd was seen carrying iron rods, daggers, axes and also petrol.

The fury was next directed against the Communist Party office, where the mob led by League workers, made eight consecutive attacks. The battle went on for two hours, during which most of the Communists present were wounded. Tables and chairs were broken, books worth over Rs 3000 burnt, and pictures destroyed even including one of Mr Jinnah.

The Communists were thrown out on the street, their fountain pens and wrist watches and purses were snatched away from them. Ranadhir Das Gupta and Saradindu Dastidar were seriously wounded. Ranadhir was stabbed in the head.

Magistrate Helps Mobs

The District Magistrate and the League Secretary were found passing by the Party office when the raid was on. When Ranadhir fell, they, as if by magic, arrived on the spot. As Ranadhir was lifted in the car to be removed to hospital, the District Magistrate asked as if in a banter, "What happened? How do you feel now?"

The goondas kept up the raid, and for 24 hours the furniture and other materials burnt.

The police station was within 50 yards of the Party office, but the Police merely watched the raid, refusing to intervene even when rung up. President of the Bar Association, Atul Dutta, sent word to the Commissioner, who replied, "Go to the Congress".

Next day, the District Magistrate when approached by Kalpataru Sen Gupta, District Secretary of the Communist Party, denied all knowledge of the raid despite the fact that he was seen passing by the Party office several times when the raid was on.

Government Manoeuvres

This officer, F. Karim, ICS, was posted in Chittagong soon after the unprecedented united demonstration of the Hindus and Muslims of Chittagong against the barbarous military atrocity in the Muslim village of Kasaipara, in January last.

He immediately began hobnobbing with the League leaders, attending League meetings, entertaining League leaders to tea, and gave the impression that he was a staunch friend of the League.

While in this way he was trying to get the Muslims away from the popular united movement, the local Communists, who were already strongly entrenched in the confidence and esteem of thousands of Muslim kisans of the district by their untiring service during the famine and the invasion dangers, succeeded in getting the Muslims to fight together with the Hindus in the common battles as over the postal strike and for the building up of labour unions, including the one in the tea gardens.

Exposure of Relief

During the recent severe floods, the Government tried to bluff the public by a bogus display of relief being dropped by Dakota planes, and it was the Communist Party that exposed both in Chittagong and in Calcutta the fact that most of the relief so supplied consisted of rotten stuff or was wasted in the dispatch, while the corruption of local officers and agents was also shown up.

Hunger marches, attended by Muslims, faced the District Magistrate, who funkcd. His assistant, Mr Aziz, addressing the Muslims said, "You Muslims have fallen into the clutches of the Communists. The District Magistrate is a Muslim, and by agitating against him you are acting against your own man."

The "Direct Action" Day gave the District Magistrate the chance to attack the Communists, and the reactionary section of the Leaguers Became his instruments....

18. Trouble Continues in East Bengal

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Bengal for the first half of September 1946. File No. 18/9/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Communal

As already emphasised it is impossible to divorce the political from the communal situation at the present time. In Calcutta itself the situation is still one of the extreme tenseness and unease. The life of the city is functioning but it cannot be maintained that the situation has returned to normal: given the slightest provocation the relations between the two communities degenerate—notably on the 5th when seven stabbings occurred and the life of the city was at once affected. During the fortnight 26 stabbings, resulting in four deaths, occurred. Nineteen persons have been injured by blackbats or *lathis* and there have been five cases of arson. In addition one person has died as a result of firing by the military. Patrolling both by the police and, on a reduced scale, by the military has continued throughout the period. The police have continued their efforts to arrest those alleged to have been concerned in the disturbances and to round up the *goonda* element, and up to date 3553 persons have been arrested of whom 402 are *goondas*—most of the latter will probably be externed under the provisions of the Presidency Area (Emergency) Security Act, 1926, which was enforced during the period. The investigation of

the thousands of cases arising out of the disturbances presents the Calcutta Police with a major administrative problem. The eventual trial of hundreds, if not thousands, of accused will also be a matter of extreme difficulty and the possibility of simplifying the procedure by *ad hoc* legislation to enable cases to be disposed of in a reasonable time is now under the consideration of Government.

Elsewhere in the Province, though the number of incidents have fortunately been few, the situation, particularly in East Bengal, is still very serious. Energetic efforts have been made to establish Peace Committees and to muster public opinion in favour of the maintenance of communal harmony, and definite instructions have been issued to District Officers to take action against speeches and writings likely to foment violence in whatever form.

On the 6th there were two stabbing cases in Howrah. Elsewhere in the Province specific incidents have been confined to Dacca and Tippera. In Dacca city, where there is still a tendency on the part of each community to resort only to market and shopping centres in their own *mahallas* or even, where necessary, to open new ones for this purpose, one case of stabbing was reported on the 2nd after which there was a lull until the 6th when there was a case of arson. Looting occurred on the 8th; looting and brickbatting on the 10th and 12th. On the 14th there was a further report of looting and brickbatting, one of the looters being shot dead by a constable. Two persons were also stabbed. On the 14th the situation deteriorated considerably when there were three cases of stabbing, four cases of arson and some brickbatting, and the total casualties for the day were two dead and thirteen injured. In the district of Tippera a boat was looted in Bancharampur Police Station on the 1st and in the same area there was large-scale looting on the 5th and 7th, while on the 11th there was some looting in the police station of Choudagram.

The Dacca Commissioner takes the view that the present panic mentality and distrust must continue on the Hindu side until the Hindus become quite convinced that Muslim authorities, either central or local, are not planning any mass attack on Hindu minorities in East Bengal. He considers it fortunate that, generally speaking, there has been no indication of any widespread intention on the part of local Muslim League leaders in the Dacca Division to exploit what is potentially a very dangerous state of affairs--only from the Faridpur district comes a contrary report where advantage of the Id celebrations was taken to preach party politics fomenting communal friction and advocating violence.

19. Motion of No Confidence in Muslim League in Bengal Assembly

Extracts from Assembly proceedings, 19 September 1946. Official Report, Bengal Legislative Assembly (Second Session 1946); Vol. 71, No. 3; Appendix L.

Mr Abul Hashim: ... I have no doubt, as I have full confidence in the intelligence and power of understanding of our friends on the Congress benches, that if they could rise above their own peculiar interest and could see things objectively and make an analysis of the grievances of the Muslims in a dispassionate attitude, they would have, instead of bringing a motion of nonconfidence against this Ministry, particularly against the Home Minister and the Chief Minister, the Hon'ble Mr Suhrawardy, brought a motion of confidence in him....

While here in India the Hindus and Muslims were quarreling with each other, the great leaders of the Congress and the League alike were squarely beaten by Sir Stafford Cripps and his colleagues by their superior political intellect. Let this be admitted first, realised first, and then there will be no difficulty whatsoever in finding out who was responsible for this great

killing, where the remedy lies and then do our work. We should never forget the British possessions in India are coloured red. The red colour on map of India faded by our struggle of the last forty years. Now they want to have a fresh coating of red by the blood of Hindus and Muslims alike. The Calcutta carnage is a beginning, and unless we take warning it will take place and the blood of Indians will put a fresh coating on the red colour of the map of India for another one hundred and fifty years or more....

Here in Calcutta today we find our friends in the opposition, have come forward with a motion of non-confidence against Mr Suhrawardy on the ground of incompetence and indifference and they have asked him, appealed to him in the name of God to resign. I would ask them also in the name of God and anything that is sublime, let them analyse their own mind and ask themselves whether it is a fact or it is not a fact that Mr Suhrawardy was found at his height of genius during this carnage.... We found during those days Muslims in bands and parties coming to us and complaining that Mr Suhrawardy was attending too much to the Hindus. We found him working restlessly without food, without sleep these three, four days, locking himself up in Lall Bazar Control Room passing orders....

... Will this public calamity, the blood of our friends, relations and comrades help in levelling our differences and make a united effort to drive out the third party, British Imperialism from India?

20. Communists Abstain in Congress No Confidence Motion in Bengal Assembly

Extracts from Assembly proceedings, 19 September 1946. Official Report, Bengal Legislative Assembly (Second session 1946); Vol. 71, No. 3; Appendix M.

Mr Jyoti Basu: Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir I feel I must participate in this debate as a representative of a working-class constituency composed of both Hindus and Muslims and let us pay a tribute to the working-class of Calcutta and its suburbs for keeping comparatively aloof from the carnage that has disgraced our city and blackened most horribly our political life.

... Let us put first things first. and before we pillory the Ministry—which has an enormous amount of acts of omission and commission to account for—let us see the prime mover in the dastardly game against us, let us with all our indignation realise that it is British Imperialism our enemy no 1 which keeps us down, keeps us divided and maddens our people and now proudly maintains in Calcutta a miserable desert peace that might break any moment.

Every time previously we have had a communal riot we have rightly condemned Imperialism as its main instigator and seen in our people only hopeless, pathetic pawns in imperialist hands. There is no reason to think differently now.... I ask, Sir, what were the secret plans discussed at the Governors' conference presided over by the Viceroy after which the Sind Governor disallowed the declaration of holiday on the 16th August and the Bengal Governor did the contrary in Calcutta that seat of British business? How was it that Government had literally abdicated in Calcutta for two days and who saw to it that the police abstained from their ordinary duty and helped in loot and arson? We have known how the police break up strikes. We have seen how they acted on Rashid Ali Day to disperse our revolutionary youth; that is how they act in suppressing people's upsurge. We have experienced how in 1942 the police let loose their terroristic rule without reference to the Ministry. But this was an occasion when the people fell apart and they realised their rule would be strengthened. Hence

it will not avail these autocrats to take shelter behind constitutional procedure. Would they have done the same thing if Englishmen were waylaid or their property looted or military trucks burnt? This is what is palpable and meets the eye, but one can only guess the diabolic method of the CID in working up the riot because presumably they knew of the preparations that were afoot. Therefore I assert Mr Deputy Speaker, this malevolent neutrality of the Governor and the Police Commissioner was deliberately planned....

... Mr Suhrawardy knows, saw it with his own eyes, felt it on the windscreen of his car on the noon of the 16th August that the crowds were getting out of control. It was his business to see that the Police Commissioner under him carry out his duty. But there is nothing to show the Prime Minister acting in a determined way: Is he thinking of suspending the Police Commissioner or other Deputy Commissioners who failed to do their duty? In spite of everything I maintained that imperialist policy could never have landed us in this catastrophe but for the part played by the League and the Congress in falling victims to the evil conspiracy....

... It is only in a spirit of patriotism that the political parties can together save Bengal by working for a Coalition Ministry, a Ministry which will break with the Europeans and follow as I have stated a programme of progressive legislation, living wages, protection of unions, abolition of landlordism, fair minimum price of jute, adequate food and cloth for all, complete civil liberties and release of remaining political prisoners.

We shall therefore not vote for any side in this debate arising out of a resolution of no confidence. It will only fan the flames of a fratricidal war. Our appeal goes to our common people—Hindus and Muslims—to mobilise their forces, so that they may not be involved again and again in mutual slaughter leading to the smashing of our trade unions, ending our fight for more wages and better conditions of life and strengthening the Europeans' evil rule. In the spirit of Rashid Ali Day, RIN ratings' mutiny, INA trials movement and General Strike of July 29th, the people, the united people will force the leaders to work together and common humanity will march on to peace and freedom. It is time for them to say, "Never, never again shall we raise our hands against our brothers; never never again shall we tolerate those who speak in terms of Hindus and Muslims and make us fight."

21. Police Blamed for Inaction During Riots

Extracts from Assembly proceedings, 28 September 1946. Official Report, Bengal Legislative Assembly (Second Session 1946); Vol. 71, No. 3; Appendix N.

Mr Kiran Sankar Roy:... Whenever we have pressed for sufficient police force or the use of drastic force the reply has been—if the Hindus and Muslim choose to fight, the Government has not sufficient force to put down the riot which is in the nature of a civil war. This shows utter lack of appreciation of the situation. It assumes wrongly that each and every member of the two communities is taking part in the fight or desires this fight. I deny this calumny. Ninety per cent of the Hindus and Muslims of this province want to live in peace. It is only the hooligans who kill, loot, create panic, bring the life of Calcutta into standstill and spread anarchy in Bengal....

I should have thought the police would vigorously comb out the goondas of these and other notorious places. We have heard that the *bustees* are full of new faces. Suspicious looking people are moving from *bustee* to *bustee*, after curfew signals are given by invisible persons by whistling. Various pamphlets, printed and typed, are being distributed. One feels there is

some organisation going on underground from concerned hooliganism. I hope the Hon'ble Chief Minister would direct the Criminal Intelligence Department to enquire into this matter....

The worst feature of these riots—more than looting—more than murder, even more than killing of children, has been the forcible abduction of a large number of women. This is a matter on which I do not wish to dwell. It is even painful and humiliating to mention. But, Sir, I regret to say that not a single of those unfortunate women has yet been traced....

... I suggest that the Hindus and Muslim members of each district should jointly tour the district to stop this fratricidal war....

22. Recrudescence of Communal Trouble in Calcutta and Dhaka

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Bengal for the second half of September 1946. File No. 18/9/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Communal

The communal situation, both in Calcutta as well as in Dacca, must still be considered to be extremely unsatisfactory. In Calcutta a steady improvement was noticeable until the 22nd when there was a definite recrudescence of individual attacks, mainly in North Calcutta, and the military, who had withdrawn on that date, were compelled to return on the following day. During the fortnight 40 deaths have been reported to the police and 140 instances of stabbing, attacks with lathis, etc. The unease in the city has compelled the continuance of the guards on the trams on certain routes. The conservancy organisation, up-to-date fortunately free from panic, is now beginning to show signs that they, too, may demand protection before they would go to work in certain areas. A broadcast by His Excellency the Governor and several statements by the Hon'ble Chief Minister—having as their main theme the return to communal harmony and the avoidance of panic—have been made. In addition Peace Committees have functioned though all attempts to form a Central Peace Committee have failed through the opposition of certain Hindu political leaders. The efforts that are being made to restore confidence are, however, having their result and in spite of the unfortunate repercussions on the city at these fresh outbreaks the public are making determined efforts to carry on normally.

Proposals have now been received from the Commissioner of Police to impose Collective Fines on certain areas of the city where there have been renewed outbreaks: these proposals are now under consideration of Government. The total number of arrests effected so far is 5003, of whom 608 are goondas who have been or will be eventually externed under the provisions of the Presidency Area (Emergency) Security Act (Bengal Act III of 1926).

Certain relaxations of the present 144 orders—both in respect of the curfew as also in respect of processions—will be made for the coming Puja festivals.

Apart from Calcutta the main centre of disturbance in the province is Dacca town and during the fortnight there have been 60 stabbing cases and 19 cases of brickbatting; 75 cases of arson, 2 cases of rioting and 2 cases of looting have been reported. Collective fines totalling over a lakh of rupees have been imposed. A most disquieting feature is the fact that on six occasions members of the public used firearms and a few bombs have also been thrown. The Police opened fire on several occasions. It is particularly unsatisfactory that the disturbances in the Dacca town have spread to the villages in the vicinity and as a result some 3000 Hindu refugees have now sought shelter in the town. This latest development is particularly unfortunate

in view of the impending Puja festival and the necessity for concentrating as many police as possible in the town itself. The Chief Minister accompanied by a peace party visited Dacca during the fortnight and made a general appeal for communal harmony during the Puja period. Elsewhere in the province there have been few incidents and speaking generally the situation shows signs of improvement.

It is satisfactory that, apart from Dacca town and its immediate suburbs, there has been no incident reported from any other part of the Division. The District Magistrate and Subdivisional Officers have worked hard to form Peace Committees and their efforts have contributed materially to the avoidance of any outbreak. In the Chittagong Division it is satisfactory that the general situation has improved though there is still a strong undercurrent of feeling. In Chittagong itself there is a feeling of greater confidence despite two cases of stabbing, resulting in one death and it has been found possible to withdraw the curfew order.

In Noakhali a clash between Naths and Muslims resulted in 2 deaths and 1 person injured; while in Howrah a bottle of acid was thrown at a bus resulting in seven persons being injured.

Miscellaneous

The arrangements for the accommodation of persons affected by the disturbances in Calcutta have been still further reduced and the latest figures indicate that there are now 36,731 refugees in 133 centres run by nonofficial organisations in receipt of Government supplies. In addition there are some 1700 destitutes and 521 orphans in Government relief centres. Several camps are also in readiness to house persons rendered homeless but only 329 persons so far have sought admission—the bulk of the homeless remaining in nonofficial centres.

23. Calcutta Transport Workers Demand Police Protection

Extracts from a news report, 'Armed guards demanded'. *Hindustan Times*, 1 October 1946.

Calcutta, September 30. An appeal to all public transport workers of Calcutta to suspend their services with effect from October 3 till such date "When Government and the public realize their duties and responsibilities towards transport workers," has been made unanimously by a joint meeting of members of the Bengal Bus Syndicate and the Calcutta Association.

The appeal has been made on the ground that the police authorities refused to provide any armed guard in the buses and taxicabs in the present situation and also to allow an assistant to sit by the side of the driver armed with some weapon for self-protection....

24. 'Business is Business'

Extracts from a featured column, 'A patriot's notebook'. *People's Age*, 6 October 1946.

Calcutta, August 14. Big Businessman Nalini Ranjan Sarkar (notorious for joining the Viceroy's 'expanded' Executive Council despite the Congress ban) is back on the Congress platform, pouring venom at the Muslim League for its 'Direct Action'.

At exactly the same time, Big Businessman Ispahani was busy rallying the League masses for 'Direct Action', vomiting hate against the Hindus and the Congress.

Two days later, the Calcutta carnage began. Among the thousands killed, there were no Big Businessmen.

Exactly one month later, a full page advertisement appeared in the Calcutta Clive Street journal—*Capital*—announcing the floating of a new one-crore business venture: Ispahani Chemicals Ltd.

Its chief Directors are: Nalini Ranjan Sarkar and Ispahani. Among the other Directors are: the arch-communal Leaguer, the Raja of Mahmudabad, and one of the great House of Birla's whose chain of newspapers day in and day out, pour out columns and columns of anti-League vituperation.

Riots for the common people. Unity is the prerogative of Big Business....

25. Second Round of Disturbances in Calcutta

Letter by Kalipada Mukherji, Secretary, Bengal Provincial Congress Committee, to the General Secretary, All India Congress Committee, Allahabad; Calcutta, 8 October 1946. File No. G-53; All India Congress Committee Papers (1946); Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

*Calcutta,
8 October 1946.*

Dear Friend,

We beg to send herewith : short report of the communal disturbances in Calcutta between the 22nd September and 7th October, 1946-- a period which may be turned [termed] as the second phase of the Calcutta disturbances.

Regarding the troubles in mafussil, owing to the non-publication of the nationalist papers for one week and the delay due to the postal correspondence we are not in possession of reliable facts though cases of hooliganism in isolated places in the mafussil are trickling down. The cases of stabbing and arson, though few in number, are continuing unabated in the Dacca city yet.

Yours fraternally,
Kalipada Mookerji,
Secretary, BPCC

Enclosure.

Second Phase of Disturbances in Calcutta (From 22nd September to 7th October 1946)

After a comparative lull of four weeks [a] second phase of communal disturbances in Calcutta started in the afternoon of 22nd September. A Muslim mob, 60 or 70 strong, armed with lathis, swords and daggers raided a house of Hindu at 81 Raja Dinendra Street. The locality is known as Lalabagan which is a predominantly Muslim area. The mob broke open the front door of the house and attacked the inmates. One of the victims was thrown down from the roof of the three storeyed house. This incident marked the opening of the second phase of the disturbances.

The trouble took a rather serious turn on Monday the 23rd September. It started from the early morning and spread to almost all the Muslim predominated areas of the city. Pedestrians were stabbed as also there were some cases of pitched fighting. Many buses and some tram cars were stopped by the Muslims and passengers were assaulted. Buses were not provided with the military or Police protection, so they were the most easy targets of the Muslim attackers. Tram cars of some routes were provided with military guards, one guard for each tram. These

guards were often of no use when trams were attacked and passengers mercilessly beaten. Such an instance occurred in front of the famous Nakhoda Mosque at Lower Chitpur Road where a Muslim mob armed with daggers and lathis, stopped a tram car, attacked the conductors and occupants of the car and forcibly removed three young girls from the car. One of the passengers requested the guard on duty to open fire but he declined stating that he had no such order from the higher authority. On this date 8 persons were killed and over 60 were injured. There were some cases of arson and a cracker was thrown into a house. It is to be noted that the majority of the military pickets were suddenly withdrawn during the night of the 22nd September though the disturbance at Raja Dinendra Street, as reported above occurred in the afternoon of that date and this had some bearing on the happenings of the 23rd September. Strong military pickets were reimposed at noon when the situation had already deteriorated to a large extent.

On 24th September disturbances occurred in a fairly widespread area and were mainly confined in Muslim localities. There were 18 cases of stabbing and assaults. Buses and tram cars were attacked. Five persons were stabbed in Ameer Ali Avenue, Park Circus, which is a Muslim locality, where a Muslim mob armed with lathis and daggers stopped a tram car and attacked the passengers.

On the 25th, Calcutta was comparatively quiet. One incident that caused some excitement occurred in the Park Circus area when a bus, driven by a Sikh was stoned and chased by a mob of about 100 strong. There were some stray cases of stone throwing in some localities.

On the 26th September [the] situation again deteriorated. There were many cases of stabbing and assaults on pedestrians and tram and bus passengers. Five deaths and 19 injured were the casualty figures for this day. Plague spots were, as usual, Muslim localities or the localities having mixed population. The military opened fire on a mob of Rajabazar area at 11.30 p.m. as a result of which a Muslim was killed and another was injured.

On the 27th ten persons were killed and 23 injured by stray stabbing and assaults in different parts of Calcutta. These incidents occurred in widely separated localities. The most serious of this day's incidents occurred in Bagmari area where the office of a mercantile firm was raided by a mob and three employees of the firm were injured, one fatally. In Muraripukur Road area, several Hindu houses were raided and a temple was desecrated. Bus and tram cars were attacked. Near Nakhoda Mosque at Chitpore a tram car was attacked and two Hindus were dragged away by Muslims whereupon the armed guard opened fire and the crowd dispersed.

On the 28th, 6 persons were killed and 20 injured in stray cases of stabbing and assault in Calcutta. A bulb containing acid was thrown at a bus on Upper Circular Road.

From the 29th the situation is somewhat better though stray cases of assaults and stabbing are continuing even to this date.

Casualty figures from 30th September is given below:

Date	Killed	Injured
Sept 30th	2	9
Oct 1st	—	8
Oct 2nd	2	Several
Oct 3rd	3	15
Oct 4th	1	Some
Oct 5th	2	5

A cracker was thrown at a bus on this date.

A cracker was thrown at a bus in the afternoon.

A cracker was thrown at a Dashara procession at Wellesly St and soda water bottle was thrown at a bus.

Oct 6th	4	Several	A basti was set on fire and a bus was stoned.
Oct 7th	2	Several	A cracker was thrown in a street.

Total casualties since 23rd are 57 deaths and about 200 injured.

During this second phase of disturbances, it is to be noted that the general mass of the population are not taking any active part. It is mainly confined to a handful of anti-social elements in the city. Peace is being fairly maintained in the suburbs where the labour population is comparatively peaceful, though the relations between the Hindu and Muslim labourers became somewhat strained during and after the first phase of the riot. The Police do not seem to be very energetic to round up the hooligans, a large number of whom, even now, are quite at large for reasons best known to the authorities. On the contrary peace loving citizens are often put to trouble for offences committed by hooligans.

26. Direct Action Day in East Bengal

Article, 'Grim spell of fratricidal hatred'. *People's Age*, 13 October 1946.

Recently the Bengal Committee of the Communist Party held an extended sitting where the reports showed that practically all over East Bengal the backwash of the Calcutta riots were felt. Equally revealing is the sinister role of the bureaucracy and the police in fanning the flames of fratricidal war, the flames with which they hope to scotch the haunting spectre of joint battles of the Hindus and Muslims against the British Raj.

In Dacca and Mymensingh nothing happened on August 16. The co-workers of Mr Abul Hashem, Secretary of the Bengal League, are active here and they naively took the League's 'Direct Action' Resolution as a call to *Jehad* against the British. In their agitation they even appealed to the Hindus to join with them, a thing which impressed many a non-Muslims, and they refrained from coercing Hindus to join in their hartal.

After Calcutta

Then came the news from Calcutta; followed by rumours and the evacuees' tales: and overnight the 'Direct Action' showed its real face as a war against the brother. Inside the League, Nazimuddin's men, long thrown into the background, stepped forward and the worst form of communalism was soon rampant among the Muslims which had lightning repercussions among the Hindus.

With the goondas came the bloody trail all the way from Calcutta. And today the Hindus and Muslims of Dacca are groaning under the cursed yoke of the military, the curfew and the collective fines.

Similarly at Islampur thana in Jamalpur Subdivision, Mymensingh, the arrival of a group of Muslim refugees from Calcutta was the signal for disturbances: looting and the burning of a whole bazar followed.

And on the railway line off Bhairab the prevailing tension was taken advantage of by a gang of professional dacoits who have for nearly a year been specialising in train looting: holdup of trains, looting and even murder of passengers went on unchecked.

Talk of Hostages

The rabidly communal attitude of the League leaders in Noakhali and Tippera spread tension all over the districts. Full-blast attacks against the Congress marked their speeches. Occasional disturbances have continued right through September.

In Barisal, the League leaders did not conceal their anti-Hindu prejudices and at the August 16 meeting the Chairman made an anti-Hindu speech; but it was offset by the anti-British speeches of the Muslim students.

At Faridpur, the local League leaders agitated against the British but at the same time the brandishing of lathis while asking Hindus to close their shops brought matters almost to a head.

In Bogra, some League leaders suggested to the Hindus to write to the Congressmen of West Bengal districts, so that no harm was done on the Muslim minority there to avoid any possible reprisal on Hindus here.

Such is the spell of communal bitterness that the League's 'Direct Action' has spread over Bengal. The general temper everywhere among the Muslims is one of sullen waiting; dazed by the unbelievable happenings in Calcutta, they still feel that perhaps when the actual call for 'Direct Action' comes, there will be something in it worth fighting for.

Meanwhile, in West Bengal, where the Hindus form the bulk of the people, a feeling of all-out vengeance is slowly raising its head.

A local Congress leader of Burdwan district remarked that civil war had become "a painful but necessary operation".

In Midnapore, at some of the storm centres of past battles against the British, even young students are found to comment that freedom could not come until the ten crore of Muslims were finished.

Red Flag Holds Fast

In the villages, on the whole, the communal flare-up has not yet been able to spread. And wherever in the past the Muslim kisan had rallied jointly with Hindu kisans under the Red flag, the riot could not touch them.

In the district of Dacca itself, Raipura was once the notorious centre of communal bloodshed. But in Raipura and Narsinha the Kisan Sabha has taught Hindus and Muslims to unite for common battles for land, and today they jointly stand for common defence against all disturbances.

In the Red kisan bases of Mymensingh, too, brotherly unity prevailed. In Netrokona, villages which have seen big kisan battles in the past, where in the days of the Communist Party's illegality Muslim kisans sheltered even Hindu absconders, the riots could not enter. A local Muslim leader on his return from Calcutta helped to fight rumours and mischief-mongers by openly stating how he was sheltered by Hindus in Calcutta.

Fight for Peace

Similarly, in Kishoreganj, where, after the last elections, the League thought that the Red flag had been smashed away from among the Muslims, it was Muslim Communists like Wali Nawaz who took the lead in keeping peace and intervened wherever there was tension.

For instance, once a fire was noticed in a Muslim locality and the Muslims at once threw the blame on the Hindus. But Wali Nawaz came forward and boldly addressing the crowd showed how it was impossible for a Hindu to approach the spot, and later on detected the actual miscreant who turned out to be a Muslim.

In Tippera, the Red villages at Raipura where the Leaguers during the last elections tried large-scale hooliganism against the Communist Party, the kisans, including even those who supported the League then, announced that anybody coming to create trouble would be properly dealt with.

In the neighbouring thana of Chandina the Leaguers tried to inflame the Muslims by broadcasting provocative stories of Calcutta riots by loudspeakers, but even then the Muslim kisans did not raise their hand against the Hindus.

Similarly, among the workers. In the mill area of Narayanganj tension prevailed after news from Calcutta reached there. The bosses tried to use their own *dalals* to break up the Union under pretext of communal tension. The Manager of No. 2 Mill tried to set up a disruptive peace committee with representatives from different parties. But the workers refused curtly saying that there would be only one workers' peace committee.

And in the railway colony at Chandpur, it was the Red flag Union which took the initiative in forming a joint peace committee to save the colony against outside provocation.

Bureaucracy's Harvest

Throughout, while brothers fought between themselves, there is only one party—the bureaucracy—that has reaped a profitable harvest all round.

In Chittagong, the open manoeuvre of the District Magistrate to turn the attack on the Communist Party forms a story by itself.

At Dacca, the District Magistrate, when approached by a Hindu deputation for protection, dismissed them saying that he could not help Hindus as they were anti-Government, and referred to the old terrorist revolutionaries who had killed the police chief Lowman in the thirties: the price of police protection, he thus made it clear, was to disown your martyred sons who fought for freedom.

In most of the places, the District officials took upon themselves the task of forming peace committees. But more often than not, such peace committees have become the platform for mutual bickerings and clamourings for more police protection by all parties. It is no wonder that in many places, as in Barisal, efforts were made to keep the Communists out.

Police Communalism

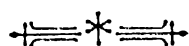
From practically every district has come the report of the police, particularly the CID and the I.B. [Intelligence Bureau], taking an active hand in spreading rumours and provoking both Hindus and Muslims in turn. At Dacca the IB officers were found to be spreading among Hindus the report of a meeting of some League leaders planning attacks against Hindus.

In Jamalpur, Mymensingh, the local Muslim SDO [Subdivisional Officer] at first thought that a little clash would not be a bad thing; but when it actually broke out, he and the Hindu police officials almost took opposite sides.

And this was true of many other stations.

Communalism among police officials and Magistrates has almost become a common thing, for, it is in this way that they find that they can make themselves popular with their own communities—thereby offsetting the hatred and contempt in which they are traditionally held.

And the White bosses of the bureaucracy openly let it grow since it helps to divide our people more and more and thereby ensure the future of their tottering regime.



27. Riots Break Out in Noakhali

Extracts from a news report, 'Many persons burnt alive: Governor's intervention urged'.
Hindustan Times, 15 October 1946.

Calcutta, October 14. Troops have been called out in Noakhali district of East Bengal and a large armed police force has been sent there following preliminary reports of serious lawlessness in the district, according to a Bengal Government's announcement.

The Director of Publicity, Government of Bengal, has issued the following press note: "The Government of Bengal have received preliminary reports of serious lawlessness in the district of Noakhali and detailed reports have been called for and are awaited."

"A large force of armed police has already been sent to the district and the military have also been called out.

"The Minister of Civil Supplies, Mr Abdul Goffran, is arranging to visit the district in the next day or two."

Reports of organised hooliganism in the district of Noakhali have reached Calcutta, says a press note issued by the Bengal Press Advisory Committee.

It adds: "Riotous mobs with deadly weapons are raiding villages, and looting, murder and arson are continuing since Thursday, October 10, on a very large scale. Forcible mass conversion, abduction of women and desecration of places of worship are also reported. Areas affected so far are reported to be over 200 square miles of the Sardar and Feni subdivisions. Approaches to the affected areas are being guarded by armed hooligans. Among the large number of people reported to be murdered or burnt alive are the President of the District Bar with family and a prominent zamindar of the district...."

28. Refugees Leave Noakhali in Large Numbers

Extracts from a telegram by the Governor of Bengal to the Viceroy; 16 October 1946.
File No. 5/55/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

The communal situation deteriorated in the district of Noakhali generally during the past fortnight. Mass meetings have been held at important places urging Moslems to enroll in a National Guard. Some of the speeches were violent in character. A strong movement for economic boycott of Hindus developed and Moslems found purchasing from Hindus were beaten up.

The situation was at first thought to be particularly bad in subdivision of Feni, and troops (one company) were moved there from Chittagong about October 9th and armed police were asked for from outside the district.

Actually trouble did not develop in Feni but broke out on October 10th in police station of Ramganj in north west corner of Noakhali. Trouble spread from there and situation as it now presents itself appears to be as follows:

Large bands of Moslem hooligans are moving about terrorising Hindus and committing acts of arson, loot and murder, kidnapping and forcibly converting Hindus. Villages have been cordoned and booty and money extracted under threats. The gangs appear to be organised. Roads have been out in places and communication difficult at any time at this period of the year has become even more difficult. Difficulty of movement (largely by boat) has hampered

operations. The areas affected in Noakhali district are police stations of Ramganj, Lakshaipur and part of Begumgunj Sonalpuri and Senbag. The trouble has spread to southern part of Tipperah police stations of Hajiganj and Faridganj where there has been looting and arson on a wide scale. Refugees have left the affected areas in large numbers....

29. Noakhali Riots Worse than Calcutta's

Letter by Sudhir Ghose, Assistant Secretary, Bengal Provincial Congress Committee (forwarding a report by Kalipada Mukherji, Secretary, Bengal Provincial Congress Committee) to the General Secretary, All India Congress Committee, Allahabad; Calcutta, 18 October 1946. File No. G-53; All India Congress Committee Papers (1946); Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

*Calcutta,
18 October 1946.*

Dear Friend,

I beg to enclose herewith an up-to-date report, as far as we have been able to gather, of the sad happenings in Noakhali for your information. Owing to the stoppage of communications the further detailed news are not available.

Yours fraternally,
Sudhir N. Ghose.
Asst. Secretary, BPCC

Enclosure.

A Short Report of the Communal Devastations in the District of Noakhali (Bengal)

Noakhali is a small district in Chittagong Division with a total population of 22 lacs, of which 85 p.c. are Moslems. Among higher officials 90 p.c. are the Moslems. A wave of anti-Hindu feelings was seen in the district, since the news of the last happenings in Calcutta with all exaggerations spread there. On the 'Id' day (22.9.46) the entire Muslim population numbering not less than 7 or 8 lacs assembled in thousands of congregations, big or small, to say their prayers from one end of the District to the other. The mischief-makers (the Leaguers) seized this opportunity to call upon their comrades for some 'direct action'. The action began with the spreading of false and unfounded rumours, the nature of which was "thousands of Sikhs have been imported from outside by the Hindus—they have begun to kill the Mohammadans they found on the route," "the Hindus have killed the Mohammadans assembled in a particular mosque." Simultaneously with the spread of such rumours, thousands of Muslims came out of their houses and began to march armed with deadly weapons. Some Hindus were seriously wounded and there were stray cases of looting, assault and mischief. Numerous Hindu houses in different parts of the District were surrounded by the Muslim mob on the pretext of searching for Sikhs and Hindu goondas. Hindu shops and several bazars were looted. Many Hindu families left in panic their hearths and homes. The leaders of the congress and others moved the authorities and drew their attention to the 'explosive' situation who remained complacent. But far from increasing the strength of the Police, their poor number were further depleted by their transfer on large scale elsewhere. There was even then no promulgation of Sec. 144 in the

District. The mischief-makers under the leadership of a Leaguer and an ex-MLA, Moulvi Golam Sarwar, daily lectured in mass meetings of Muslims and inflamed their passions. This was the beginning. It is understood the district authorities wanted more Police force, but none cared. Nor they restrained in any way the mischief-makers.

Between the 2nd and 8th October (during the Puja days) a number of incidents were reported from Police Station Sandwip and elsewhere. On the 10th October the following telegram was received in Calcutta from Secretary, Congress of Sandwip PS [Police Station]:

“Horrible Oppression On Microscopic [sic] Sandwip Hindus Looting Decoity [sic] Kidnapping Ravishing [?] Extortion Going On Police Fails To Prevent One Constable Stabbed To Death Some Assaulted Rifle And Culprits Snatched Away Hindu Life Property In Imminent Danger Protection Solicited.”

The Secretary of the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee immediately wired to the District Magistrate and Superintendent of Police, Noakhali, and requested them to despatch adequate Police force there for the protection of the people and punishment of the offenders.

But in the meantime still more horrible incidents took place in the three Police Stations of Noakhali affecting 250 square miles. On the 14th October the following different telegrams were received in Calcutta by us.

“Mass Scale Hindus Massacres Began From Thursday Tenth Entire Ramgunj Portions Of Begumganj Lakshmipur Raipur Sembag Feni, Chagalnaiya And Sandwip Affected. Thousands Of Hindus House Burnt Looted Forcible Conversions Ladies Girls Abducted Suren Bose Of Narayanpur With All Attendances Rajendra Roy Of Kabpara With Several Hundred Relatives Murdered And Burnt Several More Hindus Are Murdered Move Authorities For Military Move Delhi Immediately Whole District Likely Massacred In One Two Days Expedite Action Wire Five Thousand.”

“Organised Hooliganism Loot Arson Murder Forcible Conversions Going On Large Scale In Ramgunj Thana Portions Of Begumganj Lakshmipur Raisaheb Rajendra Lal Roy With Entire Family Zamindar Surendra Bose And Many Other Notable Persons Murdered Headquarter [?] Made Impossible No Police Help Available Unless Immediate Military Help Rendered Entire Hindus Population Will be Extinct.”

“From Ramgunj Area Hundred Of Houses Looted Burnt Several Casualties Reported Further Depredation Is Being Carried In Different Villages Indiscriminate Murder Made On Hundreds Of Hindus Of Ramganj Thana Noakhali And Villages Of Hajiganj Thana Chanderpur By The Siad Muslims Situation Most Terrible Implore Immediate Protection Pray Proceed To Area.”

“Thousands Of Muslims Hooligans Looting Burning Hindu Houses General Massacre Religious Conversion In Mass Scale Whole Ramganj Police Station Noakhali Seriously Affected Thousands Of Hindu[s] Homeless.”

The President of the BPCC at once wrote to the Governor of Bengal apprising him of the gravity of the situation, and under his instruction the Congress MLA's and the Congress leaders of the District living in Calcutta saw the Additional Home Secretary, Mr P.D. Martyn, and impressed upon him the necessity of taking strong and immediate measures and sending military to the locality. A new European ICS Magistrate (in place of an Indian) was sent by aeroplane to take charge of the District and the deputation was told that the military were already on the move towards the localities.

On the 15th October the following long and detailed telegram reached the BPCC office jointly from S.J. Kamani Kumar Dutt, (leader of the Congress party in the Upper House) and

Sj Dhirendra Nath Dutt (Deputy Leader of the Assembly Party) from Tipperah. Nothing can be more pathetic, graphic, and horrible than the said telegram which speaks for itself.

“Serious Communal Conflagration Destroyed Lives And Properties Of Hindus Of Ramganj Thana Disturbance Affected Some Part Of Begumganj And Lakshimpur Thana Thousands Muslims Attacked Hindus Compelled To Slaughter Cows And Eat Cooked Beef [sic] Hindu Houses Burnt On Mass Scale Hundreds Burnt To Death Hundreds Killed Otherwise Large Number Hindu Girls Forcible Married To Moslems And Abducted All Hindu Temples And Images Desecrated Helpless Refugees Coming To Tippera District Golam Sarwar Leader Inciting Moslems To Exterminate Hindus From Noakhali Magistrate Police Super [intendant] Noakhali Took No Steps To Prevent Wholesale Destruction Hindu Properties And Lives All Ingress And Egress Of Hindu From Affected Area Covering About Two Hundred Square Miles Completely Stopped All Approaches To Affected Area Closely Guarded By Moslems Armed [with] Deadly Weapons. Immediate Rescue Of Hindus Still Alive And Of Abducted Women Urgent Rescue Without Military Help Impossible Conflagration Spreading In Neighbouring Area Of Tippera District Has Rendered Situation In South Tippera Extremely Perilous Troubles Began From Tenth October Planned Organisation Behind This Terrible Carnage Arson Loot Immediate Posting Of Military Noakhali Tippera Chittagong Districts Urgently Needed Rescue And Rehabilitation Immediate Task Mass Conversion Of Entire Hindus Population Coupled With Immense Loss Of Properties And Abduction Of Women Has Made Calcutta Riot Pale Into Insignificance Recent Reports Troubles Spread Over Other Thanas Of Noakhali Portion Of Hajiganj Faridganj Laksam Thanas Tippera Affected Police Military Posted Extremely Inadequate Moslem Mobs Cut Off All Communications Destroying Roads Bridges If Wholesale Destruction Of Hindu Lives And Properties Be Not Stopped Immediately Whole Of Chittagong Division Will Be Completely Ravaged Soon Declaration Martial Law Affected Areas Essential.”

The BPCC thereupon sent Sj Girija Prosana Chakravarti, a member of the BPCC and inhabitant of the District of Noakhali with a batch of volunteers with some money to help the situation and do whatever work of relief and rescue they could. The President of the BPCC had in the meantime issued an appeal for volunteers and contributions from the public for the work of relief and rescue in Noakhali. Hundreds of refugees had already reached Chandpur, Chaumohini and Comilla towns and some even Calcutta. The Government have not yet started any relief measures.

But the telegrams received on the 16th Oct. show that the situation has worsened and the trouble is spreading to more areas and the neighbouring districts. The substance of this telegram was conveyed by the President of the BPCC in the following telegram dated 16.10.46 to His Excellency, the Viceroy, with copies to Sj Sarat Chandra Bose and Sardar Vallabhai Patel and to His Excellency, the Governor of Bengal, now in the hill-station of Darjeeling.

“Horrible Oppressions On Minority Hindus In Noakhali By Mobs Stop Mass Scale Hindus Massacre Began From Tenth Three Thanas Comprising 250 Sqr Miles Affected Thousands Houses Burnt Looted Forcible Conversions Thousands Women Abducted Or Forcibly Married All Ingress Egress Of Affected Areas Stopped Road[s] Blocked And Approaches guarded by Hooligans Conflagrations Spreading Other Thanas And Neighbouring District Situation Out Of Control And Worsening Rapidly Earnestly Request Immediate Introduction Martial Law And Intervention Otherwise Also Request Escort Facilities For Congress And Other Workers Doing Relief And Rescue.”

The Chief Minister held a Press Conference on the 16th and himself admitted that the situation even then was “definitely bad”. The communications have been cut off with the

affected areas, bridges have been destroyed and even the movements of the Police and Military have been paralysed.

A telegram dated 16.10.46 from Comilla reported that even the rescue parties proceeding to Noakhali from Tipperah have been refused Police protection and they had to come back. Adequate measures by the Military with the help of aeroplane[s], including introduction of the martial law, adequate relief for thousands of refugees and helping the nonofficial relief and rescue parties of the Congress and other organisations with Police escort and protection are the immediate necessity. Instructed by the President of the BPCC, the Congress MLA's of the district and some other leaders saw the Additional Home Secretary again on 16.10.46, but the latter could not give any reassuring news.

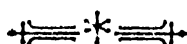
Kalipada Mookerjee,
Secretary,
Bengal Provincial Congress Committee.

30. Disturbances in Southeast Bengal Not as Bad as Reported, Says Governor

Extracts from a telegram by the Governor of Bengal to the Secretary to the Governor-General, Public Department, Government of India (1946); 17 October 1946. File No. 5/55/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Disturbances in south east Bengal. Following is appreciation this morning. East of Laksham-Noakhali railway situation appear completely quiet. Trouble is confined to triangle Chandpur-Laksham-Noakhali and within this area situation appears to have improved generally in Noakhali district except Raipur Thana and to have moved north west towards Chandpur and north east towards Laksham both in Tipperah. Concerted movements of police and troops have been launched today to enclose and isolate this area and to localise the disturbances and stop them spreading north of the line Chandpur-Laksham. 3 Companies of troops are already in area and a fourth company is moving in as reserve. Additional armed police now number 400 which local authorities consider sufficient. Two RAF reconnaissance planes will be available from tomorrow and additional W/T [walkie-talkie] sets have been sent to area.

Statistics are not yet available but on basis of extensive arial [aerial] reconnaissance and of District Magistrate's observations when proceeding by land to Lakshmipur and Ramganj, Commissioner thinks that damaged and destroyed houses may run into several hundreds only. District Magistrate observed only one dead body. Though information is admittedly sketchy our impression is that damage is not on the extensive scale that has been assumed from first general reports and that in fact any idea of widespread and wide scale devastation should be discounted until full details are available....



31. Riots Move Northwards from Noakhali

Extracts from a news report, '5000 killed in Noakhali and Tipperah'. *Hindustan Times*, 18 October 1946.

Calcutta, October 17. At least 5000 persons have been killed in the lawlessness in certain area of the Noakhali and Tipperah districts since October 10, according to the President of the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee, Mr Surendra Mohan Ghosh.

Over 50,000 others have been affected by the other acts of the rioters, namely, forcible conversions, forcible marriages and abduction, Mr Ghosh adds.

About 25,000 refugees have fled from the affected areas and 3000 refugees have taken shelter in Chandpur town.

"From the latest reports received from East Bengal it appears the situation has definitely improved and the disturbances have tended to move northwards away from the northern parts of Noakhali to the south-western parts of Tipperah district of Hajiganj, Chandpur and Laksham," says a press note issued by the Director of Publicity, Bengal, at 7.15 p.m. today....

32. Governor and Chief Minister Survey the Afflicted Area by Air

Extracts from a telegram by the Governor, to the Viceroy; 20 October 1946. File No. 5/55/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Trouble in South East Bengal is not a general rising of Moslems against Hindus but activity (apparently organised) of a body of hooligans who have exploited existing communal feeling and who, as they range the countryside, are temporarily joined in each locality by belligerent Moslem roughs. Operations, in which 5 companies of troops and some 300 armed police are participating, are directed towards isolating main gangs and localising the disturbances. Owing to difficulty of communication progress of operation is slow and contact with main body of rioters is difficult to establish, especially as area affected is thickly insulated with trees and aerial observation is not always easy. There is reason to believe that actual disturbances are now confined to extreme north west corner of Noakhali district and 3 south-west thanas of Chandpur subdivision of Tipperah.

In areas which are or have been affected damage to property (often after desertion by owners) will probably prove heavy but all evidence available supports conclusion that figure of 5000 dead quoted in Calcutta press is grossly exaggerated. The number should certainly not be in four figures category and is expected to be low in three figure category. No official report so far received has referred to presence of dead bodies in any number. Subdivisional Magistrate of Chandpur reports that only 5 or 6 deaths have been reported there and that number of persons injured among 10,000 refugees at that centre is 2 or 3. Statistics are however impossible to obtain locally when so many of Hindus have fled....

... There can be no question that Hindu population not only in areas already affected but far beyond them are panic-stricken and many of them have left their homes in areas remote from the disturbances and have flocked into the relief centres. Thus there are reported to be 10,000 refugees at Chandpur of whom at least half are from areas to the north where there have been no disturbances. 20,000 refugees are reported to have grouped in five other centres and this figure is probably not exhaustive....

With my Chief Minister I made two extensive flights over affected area yesterday and today. Leaflet[s] in Bengali provided by my Chief Minister deprecating this lawlessness and appealing to people of affected areas, particularly Moslems, for peace have been widely scattered from aircraft....

33. Communist Party Efforts Against Comunalism

Article, 'Communist intervention'. *People's Age*, 27 October 1946.

Immediately on receipt of the news of the outbreak, the veteran Communist leader, Muzaffar Ahmed, accompanied by Gopal Halder and Khoka Roy left for the affected area in Noakhali, and Abdulla Rasool, the Kisan Sabha leader, together with Dr B.K. Basu of the People's Relief Committee, proceeded to Comilla with a squad of volunteers.

At the same time, the Bengal Committee of the Communist Party issued an urgent directive to all Party members in Noakhali and Tippera districts to contact these Party leaders to help in the rescue work.

The directive further asked the Communists in every locality to "immediately form united Hindu-Muslim volunteer corps for peace and defence of the villages, to check lawlessness from spreading to other areas of Bengal."

In an appeal to the people of Bengal, Muzaffar Ahmed and Bhowani Sen have stated: "Of all the people, it is the Muslim League leaders who have to take up the work of rescuing the helpless in distress, because it is they who run the Ministry and because the majority of the people in the disturbed area follow the flag of the League."

"We are convinced that in the devastated area of Noakhali and in the neighbourhood, there are hundreds of Muslim kisans who have the courage and the eagerness to render help to their Hindu brothers and to rescue all men and women in distress. We urge them to help the distressed and to fight the miscreants with a courage that defies death. They have to do this to keep up the honour of their class...."

"The time has come for all our popular leaders to ponder where the campaign of civil war leads the country. May the patriotism of the common man in Bengal be roused and may the urge to revenge and reprisal be pacified."

"We appeal to the Hindus everywhere in Bengal not to get provoked but to help in rebuilding the common social life in Bengal."

"Out of the Noakhali slaughter, the ugly face of foreign domination has appeared in all its nakedness. All freedom loving Bangalees shall have to come together to end this festering sore."

34. Causes for the Noakhali Rampage

Article, 'Hell fire in Noakhali'. *People's Age*, 27 October 1946.

Right from the 'Direct Action' day of the Muslim League, tension spread all over East Bengal. In Noakhali, with a population of 81 per cent Muslims, although there was no general flare-up, a menacing atmosphere prevailed with the broadcasting of wild rumours about the Calcutta outrage.

From about the time of the 'Id' on August 29, active preparations for large-scale hooliganism were visible practically all over the district. From outside, bands of goondas were imported.

There are a number of *chars* (islets in the middle of big rivers) in the district which, being far off from the usual beat of the administration, are the notorious centres of dacoits who even in normal times prove a terror to the nearby villages.

This time, these dacoit gangs were brought over from the *chars*, and they started their depredations weeks beforehand.

Organised Lead

And these had a concerted leadership. More than one direct source has reported that the main bands of hooligans are being led by Golam Sarwar, an ex-MLA. A Muslim zamindar, he lost at the last election to the Muslim League. At that time, he posed as a 'Nationalist Muslim' and was supported by many Congressmen, including some who have been victims of his present exploits.

When Fazlul Huq recently joined the League after the Calcutta riots, Golam Sarwar also did the same, and began spreading the most virulent communalism among the Muslim masses. "Calcutta must be avenged", became his battle cry.

At a press conference in Calcutta on October 16, Mr Suhrawardy himself admitted that he was "aware of the allegations made against an ex-MLA of Noakhali in connection with the disturbances. The police were looking for the man all over the district."

Blacksmiths Collared

For nearly a fortnight, these bands began openly collecting arms. In many of the villages, the blacksmiths were collared and were forced to make deadly weapons for them.

At the same time large-scale looting of passing boats, carrying Hindus, took place.

Communalism was incited through numerous meetings, where open threats were held out against Hindus. One such mass meeting took place on October 10 at Shahpur where Golam Sarwar was present along with the police officer in charge of the Ramganj thana. Even as the meeting proceeded, Golam Sarwar's men roused by the speeches, looted the local market.

Besides, for weeks they made normal life impossible by raiding the village hats (weekly fairs) and shops, and forcing them to close down, openly proclaiming that Muslims would not tolerate Hindus to come to them.

Terror Begins

The terror thus began long before October 10, when organised looting of bazars was followed by armed attacks on private residences and large-scale murder and loot. In many cases, forcible conversion was resorted to, followed by looting of property. Forcible abductions and marriages of women were also reported.

An eyewitness, just escaped, reported he himself was forcibly converted but was ultimately saved and sent to safety by an elderly Muslim.

But escape too was not easy as the hooligans mounted guard on the roads, which were also blocked. Trenches were dug on the roads in many places, some bridges too were destroyed to prevent movements.

Why in Noakhali

This large-scale organised *goondagiri* developed into a pogrom against the minority of Hindus because of the worsening conditions in Noakhali district.

The overwhelming bulk of the Muslims are peasants who have passed through the worst sufferings in the last few years. First came the war, and in 1942 the posting of troops, on the one hand, and the 'denial policy', on the other (the district being right on the coast), ruined the villages. Military atrocities in villages were so horrifying that they gave rise to a wave of indignation all over Bengal.

In 1943, the first signs of famine appeared in Noakhali, where the worst devastations took place. Thousands of destitutes filled the district. At the other end, the proximity of the war front turned the district into a hive of war contractors and profiteers who played havoc with the lives of the people.

Behind the Instigators

This year too, famine signs appeared in Noakhali earliest accentuated by the floods in July. Already in September, rice was selling at Rs 30 with the rationing system broken down. On October 1 came the report of deaths by starvation and local workers were fearful of famine breaking out.

On top of these there returned hundreds of villagers who had taken up some war jobs or others, either as labourers in the Pioneer Corps or in the regular army. These demobbed unemployed in many cases tended to turn into bandits.

So when the League decided on 'Direct Action' followed by its aftermath in Calcutta, hell was let loose in Noakhali. Behind the instigators stood the war profiteers; and the desperate, hungry destitutes and kisans thronged the ranks of the hooligans.

Bureaucracy's Game

In Noakhali, the bureaucracy is playing the same game as it did in Calcutta. Locally, the police behaved not only in cowardly fashion but mischievously. In Golam Sarwar's meetings the police themselves were present, and made no serious move to check them. Before their own eyes, all deadly preparations went on unchecked.

Even when large-scale slaughter was going on, the thanas were besieged by people, beseeching for help, but nothing was done to turn away the hooligans.

Government Inaction

At the capital in Calcutta, the same policy of letting the riots grow was followed. Five days after the outbreak, the Bengal Government announced: "Detailed reports have been called for and [are] awaited."

Even the Commissioner of the Division did not stir out of his headquarters in Chittagong, and none of Bengal's official bosses have as yet, ten days after, visited the affected area.

After a week, Mr Suhrawardy and Governor Burrows flew over the area. Even the armed police and the military forces that were despatched were so inadequate that even the hooligans' cordon has not been broken through.

Our Political Leaders

Noakhali has tarnished the name of the League as nothing else has done, but as yet no League leader has come out to fight against it actively. While the Working Committee of the Bengal Muslim League has in a resolution condemned the Noakhali outrages, Maulana Akram Khan, President of the Bengal League, in a signed article in *Azad* on October 18 greets the Muslims of

Eastern Pakistan “for their forward march in brave steps towards the fields of action.” Not a single word of condemnation of Noakhali events appears in his article.

Suhrawardy himself has not even visited the area, but has satisfied himself by taking snapshots from the air. It is his duty to intervene, if the fair name of the Muslims has to be saved. It is for him now to call for a coalition of all parties in Bengal to save both the Hindu and Muslim minorities in different districts of Bengal from falling victims of such terror.

No Concrete Effort

The Congress leaders have taken up the call of the distressed in Noakhali. But none of the top leaders like Sarat Babu, Kiran Babu, or even Acharya Kripalani, have gone beyond inspecting the devastation from a distance or from the air. While justly castigating the League Ministry, there has been hardly any concrete effort on their part to bring about communal amity, which alone could save the country from repetitions of Noakhali.

Instead, we get the ignominious spectacle of the President-elect of the Congress running after the British Governor from place to place, and imploring him for more British troops. “Declare Martial Law”, is the full-throated demand by the very same nationalist papers today which have since the days of Jallianwalla Bagh fought against the Martial Law regime.

They are not even thinking of how British guns can be [an] instrument of restoring brotherly peace between Hindus and Muslims.

The Hindu Mahasabha leader, Mr N.C. Chatterji, has gone a step further and has even demanded “bombing from air”.

Dr Shyamaprosad Mukherjee has almost openly hinted at reprisal: “Congress Ministers should warn the Bengal Ministry that they are playing a bad and dangerous game in Bengal, which may exasperate people in other provinces.”

No Joint Appeal

Even during the Calcutta carnage, despite all their bitter differences, the leaders came out with a joint appeal and staged joint peace demonstrations. Weeks later, both the Bengal League and Congress leaders at least paid a formal visit jointly to Dacca.

But this time, with the situation ten times worse, the leaders have not cared to come out even with a joint appeal. The press on both sides has not even made a suggestion for joint effort. The only thing which they, on both sides, have called for, with great vehemence, is the despatch of more British troops.

From Calcutta to Noakhali our leaders have travelled further along the road to civil war in which they are more and more drawing in the common people, while letting the British sit on top of us all.

35. Calcutta Flares Up Again

Extracts from a news report, ‘Calcutta situation worsens’. *Hindustan Times*, 29 October 1946.

Calcutta, October 28. Hand-to-hand clashes, knifing, acid and bomb-throwing are the main features of communal trouble in the city for the seventh consecutive day today.

Twenty-three persons were killed and 151 others injured in today’s incidents in the city, according to a bulletin issued by the Indian National Ambulance Corps [INAC] at midnight

on Monday. The casualties include 44 gunshot wounds, 37 stabbing. The rest are acid burns and other injuries.

The INAC removed about 2000 panic-stricken people from the disturbed areas....

36. Congress President Tours Noakhali

Report dated 31 October 1946 of a tour of Dattapara and Khilpara, Noakhali, by Sucheta Kripalani, Dhiren Datta, and Acharya Kripalani. File No. P-5; All India Congress Committee Papers (1946); Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

On the 24.10.46 the Congress President, Acharya Kripalani with Mrs Kripalani and Dhiren Datta proceeded to Dattapara and Khilpara in Begumganj thana from Chaumohani in a military truck escorted by a saction of Rajput Regiment under the command of Captain Yusuf Ali. The truck halted en route at Begumganj thana and collected the following information:

Village Jayag

Entirely Hindu village. 7 or 8 houses burnt. Local Muslims attacked. Police opened fire on the 12th night. No report of actual casualty. Few Hindus may still be there. This place is 17 miles from PS.

Village Panchagaon

1 mile west of Jayag on the side of D.B. Road. Whole village consisting of nearly 1000 huts burnt. On the 12th at 4 or 5 p.m. a mob over 10,000 in number attacked the village. Police picked up villagers, 4 Hindus and 2 Muslims with gunshot wounds. Corpses were seen on the road. Besides this stray cases of murder, arson, looting, conversion in NW part of Ranigunj.

Village Govindapur

Arson and murder in 2 or 3 houses, i.e., of Bhowmik and Jasoda Pal. 12 or 13 persons killed and thrown into the flames. No outrage on married women yet reported, but such matters are not usually reported to the thana by the terrorised Hindus. People are kept in cordon in Unions nos 1,2,3 and 7.7000 females rescued. Unions nos 4,5 and 6 partly saved. Demobbed local ex-soldiers participated in the attack. 6 armed persons were arrested at Baragovindapur. All outrages were committed by local men. There was no suggestion of weapons being supplied by any military organisations.

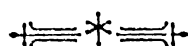
They could go by the truck on the D.B. Road upto Battali, then onward they walked on foot as the branch road to Dattapara had been cut up at 5 places by the goondas. But the road was not as bad as it had been reported by local Government officials, i.e., Dattapara was not unapproachable.

At Dattapara they learnt that in the main centre of the village no arson or murder had taken place. This is entirely a Hindu colony and the leading family of Guha Roy had some arms with the help of which they were able to hold at bay a huge crowd of nearly 10,000 till the armed police arrived. But in the outskirts of the village Hindu houses had been burnt, money had been extorted as League subscription, idols were destroyed, people were converted forcibly and property looted. They found at the house of Guha Roy (Called Dewanjibari) over 2500 refugees from this and neighbouring villages. They interviewed several refugees from various villages and obtained written statements extracts from which have already been sent. The refugees are badly in need of more food, cloth and medicines. They were all huddled up as

cattle and leading an appalling existence. Most of them had been looted of all their earthly belongings and converted. Some of them showed us the caps that have been distributed in thousands to these new converts with a stamp of Pakistan flag, a map of Pakistan India and the slogan "Pakistan Zindabad". All the caps were made of very good new cloth. It is a wonder how the goondas could obtain so much cloth in these days of stringent cloth control unless there was some powerful central organisation which was helping them.

Khilpara

They then proceeded to Khilpara. Halfway to that village was a spot called Mallikadighirpar where, the local people told us, many outrages had taken place including murders. It was a lonely spot by a high ridge with low paddy fields and thick clusters of trees ideally suited for ambush and sudden attack. They found some Muslims in an isolated hut some of whom immediately left the hut by the back door on seeing their military escorts. As this looked very suspicious Capt. Yusuf Ali deployed his men. Immediately about a dozen persons rushed out from their hiding places and ran away as fast as they could. This confirmed what the local people told the party. The hut was an outpost of the goondas. On reaching Khilpara, they visited firstly the house of Jogendra Chakravarti which had been burnt and every article plundered away. As the goondas had declared a reward on the head, the owner of the house had run away and was in hiding, while the wife lived all by herself. They offered to take her away but she preferred to remain there. Indra Nath Chakravarty, local schoolmaster from the neighbouring house came and gave a graphic account of the attack on the 12th. He said that 7 batches of 200 to 400 men each attacked the village on that day. The[y] first came and demanded subscription for the League and then looted the houses. This was followed by wholesale conversions, the Maulvis being in the raiding mobs. All the Hindu people in Khilpara were living in abject terror because the goondas were very powerful and kept watch over the locality and did not allow anyone to get out or come in. The bazar had a deserted and empty appearance. All the Hindu shops had been looted. There were 2 or 3 Muslim shops which appeared more like the rendezvous of the goondas than shops. League flags were flying over all the shops. They saw a couple of new huts which had been erected after the riots by the goondas. These they learnt served as their meeting places. The most important house in the village was the one belonging to the Chowdhury family, where about 1500 refugees had taken shelter. Almost all of them had been converted including the Chowdhury family. Here they came across more harrowing tales. They interviewed several of the refugees including the widows of the Chowdhury family of Noakhali, a neighbouring village. They were told that Noakhali and Sonachaka villages had been ravaged still worse. In this family all the men totalling 8 were butchered in the presence of the women, who had later managed to escape to the jungles and remained in hiding for 4 days till they were rescued. Shefali, a young unmarried girl, recounted the horrors of her own experience. As the Muslims were determined to abduct her, she hid in the jungle and lay under the water of the paddy field for 4 days after running away from Priyagopal Babu's house who had given shelter to her thinking that his house was safe as he had been converted. He was murdered 3 or 4 days after for allowing the girl to escape.



37. East Bengal Disturbances Reported in British Parliament

Statement by the Secretary of State in the House of Commons, London; undated document, estimated October/November 1946. File No. 5/46/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

The general situation in Eastern Bengal is under control in both Noakhali and Tippera Districts and reports do not indicate that hooligan bands are any longer operating. No serious incident has been reported on the Noakhali mainland since the 16th October, nor in Tippera District since 20th October. Some trouble developed on Sandwip Island between the 19th October and 23rd October with cases of arson, looting and murder. Some panic developed among the population and troops were sent to the Island. The situation there has since improved.

There was recently a communal riot in the Mymensingh District further north in which two persons were killed, and three houses were burnt and five looted. The situation was brought under control by police reinforcements, but tension is high. A company of troops and 50 armed Police have been sent to this area.

The number of troops now operating is 1800 and there are also 620 armed police in addition to the unarmed police belonging to police stations in the affected area. On the 22nd October Golam Sarwar, an ex-member of the Bengal Legislature, whose inflammatory speeches were believed to have been one cause of the outbreak, was arrested. A total of 254 hooligans have been arrested; 31 have been killed in action by police and military and 39 injured.

The area affected by the disturbances is approximately 160 square miles in Tippera District, the total area of which is 2500 square miles, and not more than 300 square miles in total area of which is 1650 square miles.

Full information as to what occurred in this area is not yet available. The collection of accurate information has been rendered most difficult by the fact that thousands of persons have left their homes and others are as yet too nervous to come forward with information. Precise details of the occurrences or of the exact position in particular areas will not be forthcoming until the presence of the police and the military have completely restored confidence. Two senior judicial officers of the Indian Civil Service have been deputed to visit the areas affected and to report on what has occurred. The Governor reports, however, that the information received since the reply which I gave to the House on 21st October has all tended to confirm the estimate of the position which I then gave. The following more detailed information is now available.

Forty villages in the two districts are at present known to have been attacked. This figure will probably be increased by later information. It does not, however, mean that entire villages have been wiped out. In the majority of cases the hooligans directed their attention to the Hindu portion of the village, to isolated Hindu homesteads, and to Hindu shops. In Noakhali District it is estimated that between 250 and 300 homesteads have been burnt. The exact details of the extent of the destruction in Tippera District are as yet lacking, but the present estimate is that 350 homesteads have been looted and burnt in addition to an unknown number of Hindu shops in at least three big bazaars. Looting and arson have been greatly facilitated by the panic stricken flight of householders.

A precise estimate of casualties will not be available for some time but the available information supports the previously expressed view that the casualties will be the low in the three figures category. Up to October 22nd verified cases of murder in Noakhali District were fewer than 100. The figure in Tippera District will be very low. Detailed investigations are now

being made into the alleged mass killings at the houses of leading citizens. The first reports confirm that the published reports were greatly exaggerated. The allegation that 400 persons were killed in the house of one leading Hindu in Noakhali District has been investigated and the facts have been found to be that 21 persons were killed. Another statement that 50 persons were killed at Sonaimura in Noakhali District has been found on investigation also to be exaggerated, the actual figure being 12.

Cases of abduction may have occurred, but as yet no authentic and verified official reports of abductions have been received. In both Tippera and Noakhali Districts there have undoubtedly been large number of forcible conversions. But reliable statistics will not be available for a considerable time. It is difficult to obtain information because individuals are unwilling to admit conversion and are still afraid of the consequences if they give information. The two senior judicial officers who are visiting the area have special instructions to ascertain the facts in regard to conversions.

The latest return of persons in relief camps shows a total of 50,000. Refugees are beginning to return to their villages, having been reassured by energetic military measures which have been taken to afford protection and to establish pickets in villages. Additional food supplies are being flown into the affected area by 11 planes made available by the RAF and considerable supplies of foodstuffs are being despatched by rail. Medical supplies for relief work are adequate and the Bengal Branch of the Red Cross and several other voluntary relief and ambulance organisations are working in the locality. Provision has been made for the rehabilitation of villagers who return to their homes by grants of gratuitous relief, clothes, blankets and cooking utensils, and steps are being taken to assist in the supply of building materials. Additional District Magistrates in charge of relief work have been posted in Noakhali and Tippera Districts.

38. Hasanabad Kisan Sabha Keeps Villages Free of Communal Violence

Article, 'Red Hasanabad—impenetrable steel wall against Noakhali's hell'. *People's Age*, 3 November 1946.

In Tipperah District a whole belt of one hundred and eighty villages, right on the border of the Noakhali inferno, stands like a mountain barrier preventing the hell fire from spreading.

When the history of these grim and glorious days is written, the kisans of these hundred and eighty villages will find their names in golden letters among those who fought hardest and best for India's freedom, against the machiavellian machinations of the imperialists and their agents.

Under the Red Flag

The belt of villages stretching round Hasanabad, Barura and Galimpur runs to the south of Comilla, right up to the borders of the black zone. Eighty thousand Hindu and Muslim kisans live here. Since 1930, they have fought together against the zemindars, together they have faced the bullets of the police.

United in the Kisan Sabha under the Red flag, they have stood shoulder to shoulder against their enemies, fought the black marketeers and hoarders, striven to build a new life for themselves.

Even before the general outbreak of the terror in Noakhali hundreds of Hindu middle-class families had come over the border into Tipperah—fugitives from death and horror.

In Hasanabad, they found another world, the kisans—Muslims and Hindus both—welcomed them, gave them shelter, did whatever they could to make their misery easier. Here in Hasanabad, they found that they need not be afraid any more.

Beating Up the Goondas

From across the border came warnings from the goondas.

“We shall wipe out your villages, murder your leaders if you dare to shelter the fugitives from our ‘justice’!”

The kisan army defied them to come.

The goondas sent their advance scouts to Muzafarganj and Barura Bazar. Here they spread the rumour that riots had begun. Shopkeepers, both Hindus and Muslims, began scampering off in a panic, leaving the goondas to loot in peace.

But immediately the Kisan Sabha volunteers rushed to the spot, threw the goondas out and brought the shopkeepers back, undertaking to guard the bazar on the *hat* (market) day.

The Kisan Sabha also held open meetings and warned the goondas that it would never permit them to bring their hell into Hasanabad.

One thousand volunteers—Hindus and Muslims together—stood guarding the villages, day and night. The goondas attacked, they were beaten back. Again and again. The steel wall never broke.

The goondas appealed to the Muslim kisans—“We are not fighting you, join us against the Hindus in this holy crusade!” The Red flag Muslim kisans threw them out, standing ever more promptly on guard.

Relief Work

When the general outburst came in Noakhali, a regular stream of refugees rushed into Hasanabad. Pauperised though they were, the kisans organised relief kitchens and between them fed and sheltered five thousand kisans.

Communist kisan leaders—Yakub, Chandrashekhar Das, Phani Majumdar and Ebadatullah—are moving from village to village raising more volunteers and helping in the relief work. They are also endeavouring to rescue wherever possible those who are marooned inside the black zone.

From Murain, a village in Noakhali, came three refugees and reported that 300 villagers were in danger of being killed unless rescued at once. Hastily collecting 12 boats, the Red volunteers rushed to Murain and heroically rescued 250 of the marooned villagers.

Hasanabad continues its battle. Its kisans—Hindus and Muslims—send their message across to all India.

“This is the way to fight the hell creators—together, fearlessly. This is the way to defend our Motherland from the British planned riots.”

If Noakhali is our shame, Hasanabad is our pride!

39. Kisan Sabha Worker's Account of Noakhali

Article, ‘Out of Noakhali's forbidden zone’. *People's Age*, 3 November 1946.

Round the disturbed area of Noakhali, an iron curtain cuts it [off] from the outside world. A fortnight after the outbreak no newsman had actually broken the blockade, and the tales of the refugees remained the only source of information.

But on October 17 Moni Rakshit, a Kisan Sabha organiser in Noakhali, actually got into this forbidden zone and three days later arrived at Noakhali with the first direct story of what was happening in the devastated areas.

From Sonaimuri just over ten miles north of Noakhali town, Rakshit tried to get into a police boat carrying rations, properly armed, going to the interior. But as he was refused, he began walking along the bank by the side of the armed boat. Later, the men in the boat let him come into it. Below is the story as told by him:

Near Panchgaon, we saw a man with his dhoti worn like a lungi and a newly made white cap on his head. He gave out that the hooligans had forced him to change his faith and looted all that he had. Hundreds in his village, he added, had met with the same fate.

Looted Bazar

At Panchgaon bazar half the shops were burnt down and many others looted. Those untouched were still carrying on and the Muslims in front of them clustered in small batches. We came across a few more forcibly converted, and all of them had discarded their old clothes and changed into lungis and caps. Everywhere, even on top of the devastated market, there fluttered the green flag of the League.

We rescued the Headmaster of Chatukhil School, Sjt. Atul Datta, who with his entire family had been converted but their lives were spared; the rumour about his daughter's forcible marriage was found to be incorrect.

League Flag

The Dasghuria bazar was found to be empty, over half the shops having been gutted. Yet over here too one could see the League flag flying.

On the 13th at midday we reached Ramganj Thana: here was felt the worst blast of the attack; and here too did the trouble first break out.

At the police station about 8000 refugees, men, women and children, had collected and from them I could get the story of how the storm broke out.

On October 10, ex-MLA Golam Sarwar, held a big meeting, followed immediately by simultaneous raids on Karpara, Shahpur, Narayanpur, and Dasghuria. In two days, the whole of Ramganj area and parts of Beraumganj and Lakshmipur were in flames.

Goondas' Slogans

Golam Sarwar's men at first got together all the village roughs who took up three slogans: "Calcutta Must Be Avenged!" "Hindus Have Kept us Poor!" "Government is on our side: troops won't shoot us!" And the simple Muslim villagers were roused also by the additional slogan: "Conversion is a holy job!"

The handful of Muslims who stood up against such barbarities were terrorised into silence by the organised bands of goondas.

Fury Unleashed

Thereafter, an infuriated mob of five thousand set out on an insane orgy: homes were ransacked and stripped of all the belongings; big houses were burnt down; mass conversions were forced on the victims, who were made to put on new white caps; change of faith saved them from being slaughtered but did not save their property which was thoroughly looted by the mob. And in many cases, after conversion, goondas forced them to pay, in the name of raising donations for the League.

It is difficult to make any estimate of the dead; from among the refugees I checked up twelve cases of murder from four villages. And I got the report of two forced marriages. But here I came across refugees from about 20 villages out of over 200 in the whole of Ramganj area.

The plight of the refugees is staggering. Bereft of any means of living and without any shelter, many are forced to stay in the open, exposed to cold and rain. In a room at the Telegraph Office, 15 feet by 15 feet, 80 of them, men and women, were huddled together like cattle.

Dazed and Terrorised

Terror is writ large on their faces. Life has gone out of men; women stupefied seemed to have lost even the sense of shame; and the little kids with a haunted look do not even stir. With no arrangement for cooking, many cannot even use the ration that they are being given, and hunger will soon decimate their numbers. Ten babies were born in this state, of whom two were still.

Out of these 8000, a good 2000 comprised those who are employed outside Bengal and had come with their families, on their annual visit to their native homes during the Puja holidays. Government arrangements are so hopeless that even these have not yet been repatriated.

Deserted Villages

On the 19th I set out with a relief party for Lakshmipur. On both banks of the canal, not a soul stirred on the roads or in the fields. Villages which only a few weeks ago I had seen humming with life, looked like a desolate waste. On the canal not a boat did we pass, nor a single fisherman.

Later in the evening we reached Lakshmipur. Though the place itself escaped the outrages, four thousand people took shelter at the thana here from the neighbouring village. The same story of horror we heard from the refugees. Out of another 200 villages in this area, we met the refugees from about a dozen villages and they narrated how thousands were still marooned in the villages.

Here despite acute food shortage, we found some Hindus and a few Muslims jointly doing relief work while the young men from among the refugees themselves were working as volunteers.

Bandit Chief at Large

At Ramganj I heard that on October 17 the District Magistrate and the Police Superintendent had come and met Golam Sarwar and invited him to a 'peace meeting' of Hindus and Muslims. Golam Sarwar promised to come but did not turn up. Later on, Goffran Saheb, the Civil Supplies Minister, addressed the meeting instead. And throughout all these days, Golam Sarwar was known as staying openly at his own place without being touched by the police.

When I reached Noakhali on October 20, the story was repeated to me by a very reliable source.

40. M.K. Gandhi Calls Bengal Riots a Discharge

Extracts from a speech by M.K. Gandhi at Goadburda, Bihar, on his way to Noakhali; 6 November 1946. M.K. Gandhi; *Collected Works*, Vol. LXXXVI; New Delhi, 1982; p 86.

... If they thought in terms of revenge and kept quarrelling, Hinduism and Islam would both ultimately be destroyed. No religion sanctioned what was reported to have happened in Bihar

and if anybody thought that Bihar had done the fine thing by way of teaching the Muslims a 'lesson', he was greatly mistaken. Bihar had disgraced itself, and the fair name of India, even as Bengal had done....

41. Roots and Remedies of Communalism in Bengal

A circular letter by Nalinaksha Sanyal, a Congress activist of Bengal; Calcutta, 7 November 1946. File No. G-53; All India Congress Committee Papers (1946); Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

*Calcutta,
7 November, 1946*

Dear Friend,

May I invite your attention to the following short note on the communal situation in Bengal and its possible remedies, submitted for consideration of Mahatma Gandhi on 5-11-46 at Calcutta?

Yours truly,
Nalinaksha Sanyal.

Enclosure

1. The present communal flare-up in Bengal is the result of a long process of engendering communal hatred had exploiting the same for political purposes by British and Indian politicians throughout India generally and in Bengal, a Muslim majority province, in particular, culminating in a series of utterly irresponsible utterances provoking direct resort to violence in connection with the Muslim League's Direct Action Day on the 16th August last. As at present, the situation has taken the form of a civil war between the forces of nationalism and communalism. Any approach to deal with the same should therefore be on the basis of a real and fairly long-term solution of the problem and not on finding out a sort of temporary palliative for the passions roused however much that may be necessary to save a number of our countrymen from slaughter and inhuman atrocities.

2. On the 4th and the 15th April, 1946 I addressed two circular letters to Congress leaders and workers in Bengal inviting their earnest attention to "the continued deterioration in the communal situation" and urged them "to take such timely steps as may be called for as much to restore communal harmony as to provide adequate protection for those who may stand in need of the same." I then observed, *inter alia*, as follows:

"It is apprehended that if the outcome of the present discussions with the British Cabinet Mission at Delhi is not to the liking of the Muslim League leaders, an attempt may be made to let loose mass hooliganism. In such an eventuality, it will be difficult, if not impossible, to rely on the ordinary forces of law and order for necessary protection. Congressmen should, therefore, lose no time to organise local 'Shanti Senas' for preaching, among other things, communal harmony and for arranging proper protection for innocent persons. Where such protection cannot be arranged families should be timely warned to send away at least the women and children to safer places....

Regarding Pakistan, the decisions of the Muslim League Legislators' convention at Delhi and the tirades against Hindus and the Congress hurled among others by Mr H.S. Suhrawardy himself, make any dispassionate study impossible.... Every right-thinking person in Bengal must feel strongly and must unequivocally condemn all proposals for dividing India or for

partitioning Bengal.... Yet, it may not be advisable for us to remain contented with a mere negative condemnation. It is believed that a solution acceptable to Hindus and Muslims alike in Bengal can yet be found if a proper approach is made even now.

The foundation for such a solution will lie in the introduction of joint electorates coupled with the common claim of both Mr Suhrawardy and S. J. Kiran Sankar Roy, to preserve and to expand Bengalee culture—a joint product of both Hindus and Muslims of Bengal—by incorporating all Bengali speaking areas viz. Sylhet, Cachar and Goalpara from Assam and Purnea, Singbhum, Manbhum and Santhal Pergannas from Behar into Bengal. There may not then be much opposition to the setting up of Bengal as a completely autonomous unit, retaining residuary powers, conceding only specified matters like defence, foreign relations, customs and communication to the Centre. This would mean virtual recognition of Pakistan free from some concomitant evils. The advantages of having a central machinery in the form of a Federal Executive supported by a proper Legislature over a loose confederation having an Executive organisation only and the merits of securing powers, however limited, to the Centre through statutory provisions in the Constituent Act as against treaties and charters may thereafter be examined dispassionately.”

3. On the above Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel observed: “Undoubtedly joint electorates would reverse the process of the spread of communal hatred and distrust. But a settlement presupposes willingness on the part of both the parties. The League people will do nothing or will be able to do nothing against the will of its leader, whose declared policy is to follow all the tactics of the German Fuehrer. Your interesting proposal therefore will result in nothing and any suggestion for a settlement from the Congress side will only be treated as a weakness on its part, as has been done so often in the past. I am, therefore, unable to advise you to make any effort in this direction.” (Letter dated 21-4-46).

S. J. Rajendra Prasad wrote: “I do not think it wise to create a serious difference among those who are agreed on opposition to partition and particularly when you are not in a position to say that your proposal will satisfy the protagonists of Pakistan and they withdraw their claim to a separate independent Muslim state.” (Letter dated 27-4-46).

4. An alternative long-term solution that has been gaining considerable support amongst Hindus of West Bengal in particular is based upon the segregation of Muslim and non-Muslim population, first into two well-defined non-Muslim-majority and Muslim-majority areas and then into respective majority zones within each such area of purposes of special treatment. A necessary corollary of this scheme is the exchange of population between East and West Bengal, which does not seem to be quite so difficult as is generally thought of. The protagonists of this view feel that after the Great Calcutta Killing and the havocs in Noakhali and Tippera the distrust between the two major communities has grown to such proportions that a process of segregation has already set in and will be impossible to check. With the memories of the recent happenings fresh in people’s mind it would be idle to expect any substantial restoration of pre-riot conditions of mixed living and efforts in that direction would be completely wasted. So long as such segregation is not achieved strong police and military guards are pleaded for by the supporters of this view.

5. As an immediate and practical measure to prevent Hindus and Muslims from rushing at each other’s throat the formation of village or mohalla peace committees and special constables acting under their instructions is suggested mainly with the object of maintaining peace in each locality independent of the police and the military as far as practicable and of preventing outside influence from disturbing local atmosphere. Government machinery for law

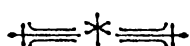
and order should duly recognise and fully cooperate with these nonofficial agencies and should strengthen their hands.

6. The usefulness of a central peace committee with politicians contending for power and indulging in 'baiting' politics and constantly seeking to find fault with one another is sincerely doubted. The practicability of such a central committee functioning properly for peace is seriously questioned, so long as the Government continues to be dominated by communal and partisan politics, endeavours to use all its powers to utilise even the permanent officials for party ends and bears softness for, if not directly encourages, the 'rough' elements of the community from which the supporters of the Ministry come. There have been several occasions when such efforts at solving some of the major problems of this province have failed in the past.

7. In case, however, the formation of such a central peace committee is considered essential for coordinating and guiding the activities of village and mohalla peace committees, such a committee should be composed of some eminent nonofficial members who, while commanding general public confidence, are outside the range of active party politics. The committee should be presided over by the Governor himself, failing which by a person of the rank of a High Court Judge in whom both the major communities have confidence. The Government of the day should be prepared to give effect to the decisions of this committee without reservation in the field of its administrative arrangements, including the posting of officials, the handling of the hooligans and in dealing with the press.

8. In our own ranks much confusion is created and considerable amount of energy wasted because there is hardly any cohesion or coordination of the efforts of all nationalist or anti-Muslim-League political and other organisations working in this province to resist the concerted action of the League to achieve its objective by intimidation and violence. The Congress in Bengal is divided against itself and the efforts of the Working Committee so far to unite the contending elements by a triple leadership combination have utterly failed and have only resulted in an opportunist alliance of persons bent upon group politics within the Congress leading to the unholy attempt of each group leader to push his respective party interest regardless of the best interests of the Congress or the country. As a consequence even tried and really capable Congressmen who refuse to identify with any group as such within the Congress are excluded from service. Apart from this, complications are created by certain leaders seeking to set up virtually independent and parallel organisations for meeting various needs, including relief and rehabilitation. The Hindu Mahasabha leaders are also taking this opportunity for consolidating their party in the present circumstances. A new menace has also developed in the serious attempts that are being made by Muslim League to win over Scheduled Caste Hindus. An earnest and sustained effort should be made to solve these difficulties.

N. Sanyal
5-11-46.



42. Ramakrishna Mission's Work in the Riot Torn Areas

Extracts from a letter by Sambuddhananday of the Ramakrishna Mission, Bombay, to M.R. Jayakar; Bombay, 7 November 1946. File No. 672; M.R. Jayakar Papers (1946); National Archives of India.

*Bombay,
7th November 1946.*

My dear Dr Jayakar,

... I enclose here in a copy of the leaflet that has been issued by the General Secretary, R.K. Mission, Behurmath, Calcutta.

You will be glad to learn that relief work has been started in Nokhali, Chandpur and other places. We have started collecting funds....

Yours very sincerely,
Sambuddhananday.

Enclosure:

The Ramakrishna Mission on the Reign of Terror in East Bengal

We are terribly shocked to read the newspaper reports of harrowing sufferings on a mass scale, in the Noakhali district and certain parts of the Tippera district, caused by all sorts of barbarous atrocities perpetrated obviously by an organised gang of armed hooligans belonging to a certain community....

To the oppressed we are sending succour as far as circumstances permit. We expect that they should defend their hearths and homes, and particularly the honour of their womenfolk, as best as they can, as enjoined by their scriptures. The duty of the common man is something quite different from that of the man of realisation. Inertia must not be confused with equanimity. Manu, the great lawgiver of ancient India, advises even killing in self-defence. And Swami Vivekananda, quoting the following passage from the *Mahanirvana Tantra*, "To his enemies the householder must be a hero," commented on it saying, "Them he must resist. That is the duty of the householder. He must not sit down in a corner and weep, and talk nonsense about nonresistance. If he does not show himself a hero to his enemies, he has not done his duty." (*Karma Yoga*, Ch. II)

They should also know that forced conversion cannot be a bar to reentry into their own fold. Religion is a matter of deep-rooted conviction which no external acts of violence can take away. As humble followers of Swami Vivekananda, we firmly believe that the Hindu society is about to shed the last vestiges of exclusiveness in the shape of untouchability, the ban on reconversion and, other social restrictions in the name of religion that no longer have any meaning and are eating into the vitals of a society that once was strong enough to absorb alien races like the Greeks, Scythians and Huns. We need hardly say that abducted women should be taken back into the society with all honour. Failure to do this would mean punishing the victims instead of the aggressor, which is absurd. Society should not make the innocent victim the scapegoat for its own impotence....

General Secretary,
Ramakrishna Mission,
Belur Math, Howrah,
22nd October 1946.

43. Bengal League Secretary's Call for Peace

Article, 'Stop this suicidal game'. *People's Age*, 10 November 1946.

Mr Abul Hashem, MLA, Secretary, Bengal Provincial Muslim League, in the course of a statement on the fresh outbreak of riots in Calcutta says: "In the present situation, the responsibility for maintaining peace and order in Bengal rests with the Muslims."

"If any Muslim tries to incite trouble or create anarchy, he will be committing an unpardonable crime...."

"There is another point which the Hindu and Muslim patriots must not forget for a single moment: the hidden hand of Imperialism is ever busy to give Bengal and other parts of India a bad name."

"In the name of the poor and innocent people of Bengal, I appeal to the sense of responsibility of the Muslims and the patriotism of the Hindus, with all the strength that my voice commands: Stop this suicidal game of killing your own innocent brothers and sisters."

"If you have any dispute with any party or any section of the people, settle it through peaceful and nonviolent means. In this madness that has taken hold of Bengal, there seems no way out but for everyone to commit suicide. This will mean an easy victory only to one—our common enemy, British Imperialism."

"To live or to die—that is the main question before Bengal today. Let Bengal stand today with her proud head held high, free from the chains of false prestige, petty hatred and jealousies."

"People of Bengal, stand united today."

44. Hindu-Muslim Amity in Hasanabad

Report, 'Immortal Hasanabad—hope of Bengal'. *People's Age*, 10 November 1946.

I reached Hasanabad on October 22. With me were Abdulla Rasul, Joint Secretary, All India Kisan Sabha, the famous relief worker Dr B.K. Basu and two doctors of the People's Relief Committee.

Hasanabad is situated on the borders of Tipperah and Noakhali, adjacent to the Ramganj Thana of Noakhali, where cruelty and barbarism reached their height. Only two miles away from Hasanabad at Kamalpur, Manipur, Naotala, Baisgaon and Murail, there have been looting and arson. But there has been no trouble in Hasanabad and the villages near it.

As I went by boat to Hasanabad from the Chitauri Road Station, I noticed with interest Hindus on their way to the interior of the village. I saw only one boat carrying a family away from the village. At Chandpur Noakhali and other places I had seen all the people of the minority community leaving the villages; I had not seen a single Hindu daring to go into the interior of the villages.

Business as Usual

It was the market day at Hasanabad. The market place was crowded. Hindus were making their purchases at Muslim shops, and Muslims at Hindu shops. Hindus and Muslims were talking to each other as always and haggling over prices. It was the normal life of the village.

At Chandpur, Laksham Station and other places, I had seen thousands of homeless terror-stricken men and women of one community and the complete indifference of the other. There had been no actual trouble in Comilla and Noakhali towns, and yet even there the two communities seemed to have been divided into two hostile camps.

Everywhere I had seen helpless men and women with signs of deep distress on their features. Everywhere I had heard innumerable stories of barbarism and inhuman cruelty.

And yet here at Hasanabad, although there had been hell only two miles away, Hindus and Muslims were living together side by side, buying and selling in the same market.

The office of the Peace Committee is in the market itself. Here I found the kisan leaders Ebadulla, Chandrasekhar Das and Phani Majumdar busy discussing their work. From them I heard that nearly one thousand Hindu and Muslim volunteers are maintaining the peace in this area.

A Boat Load of Food

Our conversation was interrupted by the sudden arrival of a young Muslim who said: "I want some volunteers." Immediately I thought that there was some trouble somewhere.

But the young messenger soon removed my apprehensions. He explained that a boat filled with food was waiting to be unloaded. His name was Ali Mohammad. He had collected rice and vegetables from the men of the Chinsir Krishak Samity, some three miles away, for the eighteen hundred refugees who have gathered at Hasanabad from the disturbed areas.

This was Hasanabad.

I also heard the story of how the united ... volunteer corps grew in Hasanabad.

On October 13, trouble started a little over two miles away. From Hasanabad could be seen the skies flushed with the flames of the burning villages. One could hear the most heartrending screams.

The people had wanted to leave the villages before the hell fire reached them.

It was in such a situation that the well-known kisan leader Krishnasunder Bhowmick with Ebadullah and Gopal Chowdhury came forward to travel round the neighbouring villages, holding joint Hindu-Muslim meetings and assuring the people that there would be no trouble.

At the same time, a volunteer corps sprang up under the leadership of Ali Ashraf and Chitta Choudhury. Later Chandrasekhar Das of Chitautsi came and joined them. It is their inspiration and the good sense of the inhabitants that is still maintaining the peace in this area.

Hasanabad is nine miles away from the nearest railway station. Boats are the only means of conveyance. The miscreants are not far away. Yet the people of this area have not run away in fear. It is their united strength that has given them courage.

"You Saved Tipperah"

It is not in Hasanabad alone. In Jalimpur, the historic centre of the Tipperah kisan struggles, in Barura and in Muzaffarganj areas also the Communist kisan workers Yakub, Phani Majumdar, Abdul Gani, Yusuf Ali, Babru Mian, Dr Abdul Bari and Syed Ali have built up a 2000-strong volunteer corps of kisans and have successfully defended this area.

A well-known Congress leader of Tipperah told me, "Your men have saved Tipperah by guarding the main gate to the south of the district."

I am writing this not to boast of the work of our comrades. I am writing this because I have learnt this one lesson very clearly from the carnage of Noakhali and Chandpur: It is the strength of unity alone that can save the country from all sorts of calamities.

Light of the Future

Late at night I returned from Hasanabad by boat. Suddenly a shiver passed through me. I heard somebody shouting: "Whose boat is that?"

The boatman replied.

I asked who had shouted. "Volunteers," explained the boatman.

Leaning out, I saw all along the banks of the canal small huts made of leaves, every half a mile, where eight to ten Hindu and Muslim volunteers armed with lathis and lanterns were guarding the area. From the boat I could see the light of the hurricane lamps at distant intervals.

I said to myself: This light is not the light of the guards only. This light is the light of the future hope of Bengal.

Fear still lives in Hasanabad; rumours remain. I returned with the hope that fear and rumour will not be able to extinguish this light, and that instead, this light will spread into every district of Bengal scotching fear and hatred wherever it goes.

45. M.K. Gandhi in Noakhali

Extracts from news report, 'Muslim crowds attend prayer meeting'. *Hindustan Times*, 10 November 1946.

Chaumuhani, November 9. A large crowd was present at the prayer *maidan* here on Thursday night to hear Mahatma Gandhi. Eighty percent of the crowd consisted of Muslims.

Gandhiji addressed the gathering for about 20 minutes. It was time for *namaz*, and he cut short his address for the sake of those who wanted to go for *namaz*.

Mr Satish Das Gupta rendered Gandhiji's speech into Bengali after the *namaz*, which was held in a corner of the same *maidan*....

46. M.K. Gandhi, a Servant of Both Communities

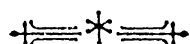
Extracts from a speech by M.K. Gandhi at a Dattapara, Noakhali, prayer meeting on 10 November 1946. M.K. Gandhi; *Collected Works*, Vol. LXXXVI; New Delhi, 1982; p. 107.

... Whether you believe me or not, I want to assure you that I am a servant of both the Hindus and Muslims.... For a thousand Hindus to surround a hundred Muslims or for a thousand Mussalmans to surround a hundred Hindus and oppress them is not bravery but cowardice.... It has been said that Hindus and Mussalmans cannot stay together as friends. No one can make me believe that....

47. Satyagraha in Noakhali for the Safety of Hindus

Extracts from a report of a discussion between M.K. Gandhi and his coworkers at Dattapara, Noakhali, on 13 November 1946. M.K. Gandhi; *Collected Works*, Vol. LXXXVI; New Delhi, 1982, p. 114.

... Early in the morning Gandhiji announced to his party an important decision. He had decided to disperse his party detailing each member, including the ladies to settle down in one affected village and make himself or herself hostage for the safety and security of the Hindu minority of that village.... Those who have ill will against the Mussalmans or Islam in their hearts or cannot cut their indignation at what has happened should stay away....



48. M.K. Gandhi Offers Solace to Women Victims

News report, 'Gandhiji visits Bengal villages'. *Free Press Journal*, 14 November 1946.

November 13. Mahatama Gandhi arrived at Dattapara on Monday, and during the past two days he visited four villages which lie within a radius of six miles from Dattapara.

Every village was a picture of complete devastation. Almost all the inhabitants in the villages had left to safer zones elsewhere.

Yesterday (Tuesday) Gandhiji visited the village of Gomatali, two miles from Dattapara. Out of nearly 500 of its former inhabitants, only a handful remained there. Almost every house in the village had been razed to the ground.

Gandhiji was told in that place that 16 men, who were being taken away by a military rescue party, were forcibly snatched away by hooligans in the presence of the military. The military did not resist, but simply looked on.

A batch of women came before Gandhiji and wept. Gandhiji talked to them for 20 minutes, and distributed vermilion and kanthi (red thread replacing conch bangles, symbolising married state) to them. A party of Muslims saw Gandhiji yesterday evening.

49. Statistics for October Communal Crimes in Calcutta and Dhaka

Extracts from Paragraphs for Monthly Summary for the Cabinet; 15 November 1946. File No. 5/12/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

BENGAL (First and Second Halves of October)

Calcutta

The Calcutta riots have already been referred to in previous summaries. During the first half of October 105 incidents occurred resulting in 21 deaths and 77 injuries. During the second half the Noakhali incidents had their repercussions on Calcutta. The situation deteriorated considerably during the middle of the period and showed some slight improvement towards the end. The total number of deaths during this period was 96, of injured 420 apart from 121 suffering from acid burns. To reinforce the police and military already in the city, two additional battalions had to be moved in.

Dacca

In the report of the Provincial Government for the first half of October it is stated that people were fleeing from minority areas or places which they imagined to be threatened. This brought on new problems including the looting of and marauding from abandoned properties and the use of deserted houses as vantage points for raids. During the period the number of incidents in Dacca totalled 25 cases of stabbing, 23 cases of arson, 9 cases of looting, 37 cases of brickbatting, 27 cases of acid throwing and 6 cases in which bombs were thrown. A serious fracas over the Kali Puja procession and a wanton and murderous attack on a train near Dacca gave a setback but the situation was reported to be improving. During the second half 26 cases of stabbing 10 cases of acid throwing, 30 cases of brickbatting and 13 cases of arson have been reported.

50. An Obituary for Lalmohan Sen

Editorial, 'Lalmohan Sen'. *People's Age*, 17 November 1946.

In Noakhali's furnace of hate, in the third week of October, at Sandwip, Lalmohan Sen, one of the heroes of the Chittagong Armoury Raid, was killed by a frenzied mob.

Sixteen years ago, as a boy of fifteen, fearlessly, with a smile on his lips, he hurled himself on the Chittagong Armoury, symbol of British Imperialism and its tyranny. Lalmohan loved his people. He was prepared to give [up] his young life for them.

Then came sixteen years behind the prison walls. Lalmohan watched the trees in the prison yard shed their leaves autumn after autumn. The world outside changed. The prisoner in chains grew from a boy to a youth, from a youth to a man.

Lalmohan remained true to the cause to which he had pledged himself. He waited for the day when his shackles would be broken and he could again hurl himself against the Imperialism, which was destroying his people.

At last Bengal snatched him and his comrades into their arms. The prison gates opened.

Lalmohan walked out into what he himself describe as "a keg of powder, which might burst into flames at any moment." Sandwip, his birthplace, to which he returned, was in the throes of Hindu-Muslim tension.

Lalmohan saw clearly what his task was. He did not lose a single day, but brought the local Hindu and Muslim leaders together and formed a Peace Committee. Day and night without sleep Lalmohan fought the hate, which he saw steadily growing in the eyes of the people he loved.

Others began to leave the village; to take refuge wherever they could find it. The situation was rapidly going out of control.

But Lalmohan would not leave. He had never been afraid of death. He was not afraid now.

He was determined to protect those who were in danger, to strive to the last to fight the riot madness, which was eating into the soul of his beloved people.

Lalmohan died so that others might live. Lalmohan died so that Hindus and Muslims might fight together against the British and against the British planned riots.

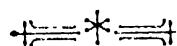
There can be no greater or finer sacrifice than any patriot, any revolutionary can make for his motherland.

Had Lalmohan lived, he would have gone back again and again to bring the same crowd which murdered him away from the path of fratricide. He would have said, and rightly:

Many among them are our countrymen, our brothers, they are those who have fought with us for freedom before, they will fight again, they are only seized of a temporary madness, pumped into them by our common enemies—those who have seized and throttled our freedom, robbed us of our land, cheated us of our wages.

In Lalmohan's name, we, his comrades of the Party he loved and for whose ideals he died, appeal to our Hindu and Muslim brothers, Congressmen and Leaguers:

Put out the flames of Bengal and Bihar, put them out—with your blood, if need be, as Lalmohan did, that is the path of freedom, that is the path of revolution.



51. A Muslim Kisan Sabha Organiser Tours Noakhali

Article, 'The story of our disgrace'. The parenthecised comments at the beginning of the piece are by the editor of the newspaper. *People's Age*, 17 November 1946.

(Sujat Ali Majumdar has just returned from a tour of the interior of the devastated zone of Noakhali. All by himself, he visited numerous villages of Begumaganj, and Ramganj Thanas, between October 22 and 29. A Kisan Sabha organiser of long standing, who had been to prison in the Civil Disobedience movement and then detained, Sujat Ali was the first Muslim leader to go into the forbidden zone of Noakhali, unescorted by police or military. Even the big bosses of the Bengal League did not dare to risk this.

Sujat Ali visited looted homes, talked to victims, talked to Muslims too, and here is his story of what actually happened in village after village.—Editor.)

In all the villages I visited, which numbered over two dozen, I saw the same common pattern. The stories I heard from refugees, I had verified from local Muslims, wherever possible, to check exaggeration.

For the whole of September, dacoities were rampant and in many villages, local *badmashes* threatened the Hindus with stories of loot and extorted money. In many cases it was taken as donations for the League. Hindu houses were in perpetual fear and were not safe even after these payments.

In villages, hooligans at first made a general attack on Hindu houses. From my own investigation I did not come across many cases of murder. These took place usually where there was resistance or against any particular target like a rapacious *mahajan* or a cruel *zamindar*, against whom stood a long-standing grudge.

With the approach of hooligans, people fled; some took shelter in bushes and in fields, a few with Muslim friends.

After this many of the Hindus returned though they had been completely looted.

And then the usual round of conversions, forced marriages, evacuation again.

Arson took place mostly in bazars or houses where the mob had any clash with the inhabitants or a particular grudge against the owners.

Press Responsibility

I noticed another significant thing—the reaction to press propaganda after the Calcutta riots.

I asked many Muslims why all these crimes were committed. Inevitably, the answer was: "Don't you know that Muslims were heavily butchered in Calcutta?"

Similarly, when I was talking to some refugees about defence, one of them commented, "Why do you talk of defence here, when even in Calcutta Hindus were slaughtered."

It was clear that after Calcutta, Muslim papers succeeded in rousing the anger of Muslims, while Hindu papers spread panic among the Hindus wherever they were in a minority.

The situation at present is serious. Muslims are already dimly realising the futility of riot. With the arrival of military, many are trying to relieve themselves of their looted property.

With the complete breakdown of normal life, prices have gone up to prohibitive levels: even mustard oil is sold at Rs 4 a seer, while *hats* (bazars) and control shops are all closed.

Military Raj

The military has already started indiscriminate shooting. Slowly Noakhali's villages might see another round of terror, but the Government has taken care to see that the anger of the people is not directed against it.

Troops that are posted here are mostly Gurkhas and Rajputs, so that when the Muslims would be hit by their bullets, they would turn even more against Hindus.

The tragedy of this crusade of hate was brought home to me when I met a young girl of six in a village. Her name was Rani and she said: "Dacoits have taken our all."

I asked: "Were they dacoits or Muslims."

The little girl flared up. "Yes Muslims are dacoits, aren't they?"

Gold in Ashes

I felt as if a knife had been slashed through me. The Muslim mob of Noakhali villages have not only killed their Hindu brothers, but have put a knife into themselves.

At Hasanabad I found a refugee Hindu boy standing guard. When he heard that I was a Muslim, his face changed into bitterness and he asked: "Why are you here?"

I said, "Don't you know that here in Hasanabad, Hindus and Muslims are all against the riots?"

The little boy smiled and answered: "Yes, here they are all against riots. They are all Communists."

Despite all the remorse I felt in my wanderings through the devastated areas, I at once felt that Hasanabad has shown, as it has shown to that little Hindu refugee child, that all is not lost and that the Red flag has saved something more precious than gold, when civilisation was burnt to ashes all around.

52. A Victim's Account of the Riots

Extracts from a letter by Mohendra Mohan Roy (a victim of the Noakhali riots) to the District Magistrate, Noakhali; Calcutta, 18 November 1946. File No. G-65; All India Congress Committee Papers (1946); Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

*Calcutta,
18 November 1946.*

Sir,

I, Mohendra Mohan Roy, s/o late Madan Mohan Roy, of Karpara (Choudhury Bari), Village Karpara, PO Sahapur, Distt Noakhali, PS Ramganj, have the honour to lay before you the following few facts for your kind perusal and making necessary investigations and paying adequate compensation for the losses that I incurred during the last Muslim raid on my house on 11th Oct. 46.

Soon after the Calcutta riots a strong anti-Hindu agitation was going on [in] the Noakhali District. The result has been a disaster unprecedented in the history of India. [As] a resident of the Karpara Choudhury Bari, one of the worst affected houses of the District, I had scarcely believed that I would like to narrate my terrible experiences which are briefly as follows:

The ex-MLA (Golan Sarwar) and his lieutenants were responsible for the propaganda instigating the Muslim mass[es] to attack their peaceful and defenceless Hindu neighbours. The late lamented Rai Sahib Rajendra Lal Roy of our house timely informed and requested

the district authorities to control the mischief makers but the district authorities regarded our apprehensions as groundless and took no steps to give us the protection we badly needed.

On the 10th Oct. 46 at about 8 a.m. a Muslim crowd of several thousand men, in batches of about 200 persons armed with deadly weapons passed by our house shouting Muslim League and other slogans as 'Pakistan Zindabad', 'Larke Lenge Pakisthan', 'Want Hindu Blood' and 'Calcutta Retaliation' and moved towards the ex-MLA's house. At about 12 a.m. another mob including both outside and local Muslims passed by our house shouting 'Want Rai Sahib's head', 'Sanyasi's Head' and on their way towards the ex-MLA's house forcibly tried to drag away one Monoranjan Bose of our house who was taken back by the Rai Sahib and others. Immediately we sent one Sailesh Roy of our house to PS Ramganj to lodge an *ejahar* but to our utter misfortune he could never come back. On the same evening the mob looted and set fire to Sahapur Bazar. On the 11th Oct. 46 at about 10 a.m. a crowd of about 700 Muslims looted and set fire to all the houses of Southern Karpura and then attacked our house with deadly weapons and shouting Muslim League slogans. In the scuffle that ensued in trying to repulse the attack, one Brojonath Das of our house instantaneously died as a result of an injury caused by a 'Konch' thrown by one Monnu Miya of Nakaribari and sometime after that the mob left our house and proceeded towards the house of Golam Sarwar. After about an hour a mob of about 8-10 thousand Muslims led by Sarwar with a gun in hand, proceeded towards our house shouting League slogans, 'Sharwar Zindabad', 'Hindur Rakta Chai' (Want Hindu Blood), 'Rai Sahaber Matha Chai' (Want the Head of Rai Sahib), 'Sanyasir Matha Chai' (Want the Head of Sanyasi). The numerical strength frightened us a great deal. We, however, organised ourselves in two groups and took shelter in Rajen Babu's building because the rest were *kucha* houses (about 100). The aged men including myself (68 years old), women and children took shelter on the roof trying to repulse the attack by throwing brickbats while the young men mostly guarded the building entrance with the only available crude weapons usually meant for home use. Some unknown passersby also took shelter in the building and joined the defence.

On reaching our house Sarwar gave the lead by opening fire and the mob started wholesale looting and setting fire to all our houses. By about 4 p.m. our defence completely broke down and they set fire to the building by spraying petrol and kerosine oil of which they had an abundant stock.

They started throwing brickbats to us on the terrace. We beseeched them for life in lieu of all cash money and ornaments of the ladies. Meanwhile some portion of the roof collapsed and we were all standing on the edges (cornice). They asked us to come down and talk matters over with Baramiya and Chotomiya (Sarwar and his younger brother), who, they said, had forbidden further killings. We still hesitated and one Ledu Shaik, one [of] Rajen Babu's client[s], and others were persuading us to come down assuring safety on oath of Koran. At this moment Sarwar ordered his men to go up by ladders and bring everyone down. The Goondas (Ledu Shaik, Shamsul Haque, Abdul Rashid, Khalek, Sikkandar, Kala Miya, Muslim Maji, Abdul Kasem, Abul Hossan Chowdhury, etc.) then came up in strength. The ladies were forced to get down. As soon as they got down they were struck and wounded, their ornaments and cash money being snatched away. The scattered men were being overpowered, their hands were tied and forced to get down and murdered. Sarwar had declared a special reward for Rajen Babu's and Sanyasi's head. As soon as Rajen Babu was forced down, his head was chopped off and a batch ran away with it making a terrific shriek of joy. In this way, many were murdered but I never left the terrace as I decided to court death by plunging in fire rather than to die in the hands of the Muslims. I was injured by brickbats all over the body and was

counting my time when all of a sudden a gunfire was heard (obviously a signal) when the whole mob dispersed in a body. I got down at about 9 p.m. and met 3 members of the house who still survived. I found about 25 dead bodies who were identified. Besides the identified dead bodies (almost all of them were our relations) there were several other dead bodies whom we could not recognise. I found the image of goddess Kali and the household deity were desecrated and broken to pieces. On enquiry about the other inmates of the house, I found that the wife of Kalachand Roy (aged 26/27) and a daughter (aged 14) of late Indu Bhusan Roy were missing. Till now they could not be traced out either dead or alive. I lost two of my elder brothers Monmohan Roy (aged 75) and Joy Kumar Roy (aged 70) and two of my nephews (my eldest brother's son) Harendra Mohen Roy (aged 50) and Sailendru Mohen Roy (aged 27/28). I passed seventeen days with grievous injuries all over my person.... With wounds all over no medical help was available. I had to live mostly in the open and as regards food the little I could procure is normally considered unfit for human consumption.

At last my second son Sukumar Roy rescued me with Police escort when I saw the light of civilisation after a long lapse of 17 days.

On the 18th Oct. 46 we heard that the Hon'ble Mr Abdul Goffran, Minister for Civil Supplies had come to rescue the family of Rajen Babu, and was waiting in his boat in a canal on the western side of Karpara. Some of our wounded persons including myself immediately hurried to Mr Goffran's boat and entreated him to visit our house and see the severity of the ravage for himself. We also prayed for our rescue, medical aid and food but he bluntly refused those and only took away the family members of Rajendra Lal Roy and none else.

I have not yet been able to recover either physically or mentally from the rude shocks of the tragedy but I feel that the perpetrators of wrongs particularly in my area are almost all local people who may be identified individually and I am also sure that moveables looted from my house can definitely be found out if a vigorous search is instituted in the nearby places.

In my humble opinion the unprovoked aggression and forcible conversion of the Hindus of Noakhali were all well planned with the support of the leaders and the authorities....

Your most obedient servant,
Mohendra Mohan Roy.

53. Governor of Bengal's Review of Noakhali

Extracts from a report by the Governor of Bengal, to the Home Department, Government of India; 18 November 1946. File No. 5/55/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

1. The preliminary examination of the information available to the local officers in Noakhali in the pre-disturbance period confirms the view that the district had been in a particularly disturbed state for some time previous to the date of the outbreak of the disturbance. The preliminary reactions are that the evidence of disturbed conditions in that district should have been sufficient to provide a clear warning to the officers on the spot and would appear to have fully justified the taking of preventive and precautionary measures.

2. Information of the actual day to day course of events during the disturbances in the two districts is not yet available. The immediate occasion for the outbreak of the disturbances was the looting of a bazar in Ramganj police station following the holding of a mass meeting and a provocative speech by the person, now arrested, alleged to be the organiser of the

disturbances—Gholam Sarwar Husseini—arrested 22-10-46. From there the trouble quickly spread to the neighbouring villages and thence over Ramganj police station as a whole. The western part of the neighbouring police station of Begumganj and to the south the northern part of Lakshmipur and part of Raipur police stations were also affected during the next few days. Disturbances as such may be said to have ended in Noakhali by the 16th (apart from the isolated incidents on the island of Sandwip) and by the 20th in the district of Tippera where they had spread to the southern part of Hajiganj police station on the 13th, following the arrival of hooligan elements from Noakhali, and from there to the neighbouring police stations of Faridganj and Chandpur to the west and Laksham and Chouddagram to the east during the next day or two. The troubles in these last two police stations, as also in Hajiganj itself, were on a minor and very much more restricted scale compared to the disturbances in Faridganj and Chandpur.

3. Though disturbances have ceased the area affected is not, as yet, in a completely orderly condition. An indication of the unsettled state of affairs has been the attacks on the police while carrying out their duties. The most spectacular of these attacks was made at the beginning of the month on a senior ICS Officer and his police party escorting Hindu refugees to a relief camp. Firing had to be opened on the hooligans who attacked the party on three occasions and seven persons were killed and ten wounded.

4. For the better coordination of Government activities in the affected areas all responsibility for directing and coordinating measures relating to relief and rehabilitation has been taken away from the Divisional Commissioner and made the responsibility of a Rehabilitation Commissioner, now appointed. The two Commissioners, who have been given wide powers in their respective spheres to direct the activities of departmental officers on the spot, will work in the closest liaison.

5. It is recognised that confidence must be restored as quickly and as effectively as possible and for this purpose the arrest and prosecution of known leaders and miscreants is essential. A determined drive to arrest such persons is now in progress and since the disturbances began evidence at present available shows that 65 hooligans have been killed and 1122 have been arrested. A spate of complaints of police and military oppression is now being received from Muslim quarters in the area. The complaints which are being investigated are the cause of very considerable embarrassment to the local officers, my Ministers and myself. The need for restraint in handling the situation on the spot is fully appreciated and it is too early yet to say how many of the complaints—of which there are over 200 against the police in the district of Tippera alone—are justified and how many, as held by senior police officers in respect of very many of these complaints, are meant to embarrass the police and hinder them in their activities.

6. Efforts to restore confidence have been greatly hampered by the presence of large number of Hindu volunteers from West Bengal attached to no responsible relief organisations—and of locally sponsored Muslim volunteers without status. As a speedy method of solving this problem it is proposed to give the District Magistrate powers under Bengal Act III of 1926 which will allow them in certain circumstances to extern such persons.

7. Restoration of confidence permitting the return of Hindus to their villages is particularly essential at this stage as the main harvesting season is approaching and it is essential that the crop should be reaped. As it has been recognised that all the refugees cannot possibly return in time for the harvest, an Ordinance is being promulgated to enable the crops of refugees to be cut and harvested, in their absence but with safeguards regarding their interest in the produce.

8. Though it must be some time before it becomes possible to relate the events in Noakhali and Tippera to exact statistics—and in respect of certain matters exact statistics will never be

available—it is now possible, as a result of specific enquiries undertaken by senior judicial officers and from other sources, to form some idea of the extent of damage and dislocation to ordered life that has occurred as a result of the disturbances. Further and more detailed enquiries are still being undertaken and the present picture will undoubtedly require modification in certain respects.

9. From present information the number of villages affected by the disturbances in the two districts will be at least 350.

10. All information at present available supports the previously expressed view that the figures of deaths were grossly exaggerated by nonofficial Hindu sources and that the number will certainly be low in the three-figure category. Up to date the verified deaths by violence in the two districts combined for the period of the actual disturbances is 131 and I do not imagine that the figure will in any event exceed 200.

11. There can be no doubt that looting and arson was carried out on a widespread scale. The latest estimate of homesteads and shops looted and/or burnt in the two districts combined, less the figures for the Raipur police station area of Noakhali not yet obtained is 2053.

12. As regards forced conversion the true facts will never be known because of the reluctance of Hindus to admit that they have ever been converted, but there is no doubt that forced conversion has taken place on a large scale. In Noakhali conversions took place *en masse* and appear to have been carried out in several forms. In some cases it appears to have been a fairly formal, perfunctory affairs involving merely the reading of the *Kalma*; in other cases initial conversion has been steadily followed up and the converts have been made to say their prayers regularly as Muslims and to eat beef; in other cases, again, there have been proposals that a girl of newly converted family should be given in marriage to a Muslim. From impressions gained during the early part of this month, it would appear that Muslims situated near the military or police posts were not daring to pursue the matter further but elsewhere threats and pressure continued. No complaint of circumcision has been made. The District Magistrate, with the active concurrence of the Secretary of the District Muslim League and the local Congress, has issued a statement emphasising that Islam does not recognise forced conversions.

In Tippera conversions have also been on a wide scale and have taken a number of forms including forcing converts to wear a cap on which has been inscribed 'Pakistan', compelling them to wear a *lungi* as worn by Muslims, removing the caste marks from the foreheads of girls and women, breaking the conch bracelets on the wrists of married women, making them recite prayers and forcing them to eat beef. No case of circumcision has been reported.

13. As regards abductions, forced marriages and rape—all concerned are and will be extremely reluctant to make any complaint in respect of these matters. From present information available from Noakhali it would not appear that abduction and forced marriages took place on any considerable scale and in fact only one specific case of forced marriage has been brought to notice.

The exact position is equally obscure in Tippera but here also present information does not indicate that the final figures will be large. Though no verified figures have as yet been supplied, investigation by a senior judicial officer on the spot did not result in the receipt of information pointing to women being carried away and not being heard of again. Instances, based on hearsay, were however brought to his notice of women and children being collected and taken to a homestead or school and kept there for a few days. Such persons were also reported in certain cases to have been raped during the period of restraint but these allegations

could not be verified locally. In the circumstances then prevailing it is too much to hope that no such incidents occurred. No single instance of a forced marriage was brought to his notice and according to the estimate of the District Magistrate the number is likely to be very few.

14. In the earlier part of the month it was still necessary for parties of police and military to escort parties of Hindus from villages in Tippera to relief centres. In Noakhali, where there have been considerable pockets in which Hindus who had been subjected to arson, looting, conversion, etc., were virtually marooned, the main areas being outlying parts of the Lakshmipur police station and some 15 villages in the Raipur police station, these operations are still in progress.

15. The following were special features of the disturbances in Noakhali:

- (a) a reluctance to damage schools or post offices;
- (b) numerous instances where Muslims gave shelter to Hindus;
- (c) mobs seldom seriously injured or killed women; and
- (d) the mobs included large numbers of Muslims belonging to the village attacked and neighbouring villages.

In Tippera the hooligans were almost invariably inhabitants of the villages attacked or neighbouring villages, except in the early stages when hooligans came across the border from Noakhali.

16. Apart from the troops, the following staff and Special Armed Forces (Police) have been posted to the affected areas in the two districts:

Addl. Superintendent of Police	2
Deputy Superintendent (1) and Circle Inspectors (4)	5
European 'Reserve' Inspectors	2
Sub Inspectors of the investigating staff	27
Asstt. Sub Inspectors	30

Including 72 officers and men of the Tippera Emergency Force and 45 of Noakhali, there are now 935 officers and men of the Armed Branch of the Bengal Police operating in these two districts. Steps are being taken to relieve and replace officers who are held to have failed in their duty during the disturbances or the subsequent operations to restore order and arrest the offenders.

54. Central Government's Nonintervention in Bengal Questioned

Extracts from a debate on 19 November 1946 in Council of State during Supplementary Questions to Question No. 97 by Surput Singh File No. 8/22/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

The Hon. Mr Thirumala Row: Have the Central Government not got power to intervene when serious disturbance breaks out in such an area in the country?

The Hon. Mr A.E. Porter: I think that the question was referred to recently by Mr Henderson in the House of Commons and I would refer the Hon. Member to the reply there given.

The Hon. Mr Thirumala Row: We are not in the House of Commons today. I want to know if the Honourable Member in charge of the Home Department has got the experience of 1942 when the whole system of law and order was centralised and is it right that they should now plead that they have no power or refer us to some other proceedings elsewhere?

The Hon. the President (to the Hon. Mr Thirumala Row): Please do not argue; put a question.

The Hon. Mr Thirumala Row: I want to know if the Honourable Member cannot exercise his powers just as he exercised in 1942 to put down a popular movement?

The Hon. Mr A.E. Porter: Conditions of 1942 no longer exist.

The Hon. Mr Thirumala Row: You are still here. 1942 may not exist, but the persons who existed in 1942 continue to exist in the Government of India today.

The Hon. Mr S.K. Roy Chowdhury: What is the extent of lawless disturbance that will require the intervention of the Government of India?

The Hon. Mr A.E. Porter: Disturbances which attract the intervention of the Government are those threatening the security of India by war.

The Hon. Mr G.S. Motilal: Isn't there Section 102 which also provides that in the case of internal disturbances the Government of India may exercise powers if an emergency is declared?

The Hon. Mr A.E. Porter: If the security of India is threatened by internal disturbance or war the Central Government may take upon itself certain legislative functions which otherwise are purely Provincial subjects.

The Hon. Mr S.K. Roy Chowdhury: If the civil administration fails in a particular part, is it not the duty of the Central Government to intervene?

The Hon. Mr A.E. Porter: It is not in the constitution, Sir, of the Government of India....

The Hon. Mr A.E. Porter: Sir, before the questions come to an end I would like to ensure that I have not misled the House by a careless statement. In a supplementary question to question No. 97, my Honourable friend, Mr Motilal, referred to Section 102 and asked whether it was a fact that the Government of India could issue a declaration of emergency. I am told that I said in answer "Yes," which, I am afraid, was a slip of the tongue. As the House knows perfectly well, the declaration of emergency is made not by the Government of India but by the Governor General in his discretion and if in fact I did say what I am alleged to have said I should not like this opportunity to go by without removing any misunderstanding which may have been caused in the minds of Honourable Members of the House by my careless statement.

55. Congress MLA Impressed with Hasanabad's Communal Unity

Extracts from an article 'Oasis'. *People's Age*, 24 November 1946.

Shrimati Ashalata Sen, Congress MLA, herself hailing from Noakhali, recently visited Hasanabad. In a statement after describing the agonies of refugees that she had seen, she said: "Yet amidst this gloom of heartrending sorrow I have found solace on witnessing this unique thing of Hasanabad's Hindus and Muslims clasped in brotherly unity, making wholehearted effort to save the distressed."

"While a mile and a half away there was going on an orgy of loot, arson, conversion, assaults and even murders at places, when even neighbours joined with hooligans in attacking neighbours, even at such a time, leading Hindus and Muslims of Hasanabad brought together Hindu and Muslim common men and saved this part from havoc."

"On visiting Hasanabad, we felt as if this centre is a cool shaded oasis amidst the furiously burning Sahara...."

56. A Critique of the Reporting of Riot News in Bengal Press

Article, 'Riot news in Bengal press'. *People's Age*, 15 December 1946.

Most of the readers of Bengali newspapers read either the *Ananda Bazar Patrika*, the *Azad* or the *Bharat*. Public opinion among Bengali Hindus and Muslims is mainly created by these papers. How have these papers reported the carnage in Noakhali and Bihar?

On October 15, when Noakhali news was first published in Calcutta papers, the *Azad* published it on page two in a corner with a single column headline: "Anarchy In Noakhali".

On October 16, at the bottom of page three, was seen: "Situation At Feni Under Control". Yet, the news read: "A Government press note states that serious anarchy is continuing in three thanas of Noakhali.... Reports of trouble have been received from Habiganj in Tipperah District."

On October 17, they splashed the news about Noakhali on page one, thus: "Serious Steps To Stop Trouble In the Affected Areas Of Noakhali: Statement of Mr Suhrawardy". The actual news about the situation was published on page three: "The Riot Situation In Noakhali: More Troops Sent to Affected Areas". The report itself stated that according to official statements "Serious trouble is continuing in seven thanas".

But the biggest misstatements came when the *Azad's* special correspondent went to the affected areas personally. "The number of killed and wounded cannot be more than a hundred. I have not found a single instance of conversion, assault on women or forced marriages.... (These) stories are not only mere exaggerations, but totally without foundation." This despatch came from the *Azad's* correspondent on November 8. From now on Noakhali news of exactly similar type started being published prominently next to the editorial or on page one!

Bihar riots were treated in exactly the same manner by the *Ananda Bazar Patrika*. On October 28, the *Ananda Bazar* published a small paragraph on page five with the headline. "Two Hundred Houses Reduced To Ashes In Communal Disturbances At Chapra".

On October 29, news of Bihar disturbances appeared again on page five.

It was the same on October 30: "Many Casualties At Saran Due To Riots". The report read: "Fifty persons have been killed in a village in Chapra district. At Bhagalpur town during a riot one afternoon, 30 persons were killed. It means the riots have spread to three districts of Saran, Bhagalpur and Chapra."

On October 29, the *Ananda Bazar* filled in half of its page two with a report from its Patna correspondent entitled: "Various Problems Of Domiciled Bengalis In Bihar", but it had only an unimportant corner for the riots.

On October 31, in an attempt to explain away the gruesome tragedy, the *Ananda Bazar* headlined Syt Srikrishna Sinha's Statement, in bold types: "Bihar Disturbances- Repercussion Of Goondaism Perpetrated In Bengal".

No wonder that entirely different ideas are formed about the riots by the readers of the nationalist and the League Press.

Pandit Nehru gave a statement in the Central Assembly on Bihar riots. This is how the Bengali press headlined the report of his speech: "The Incidents Of Calcutta And Noakhali Infuriated The Biharis". (*Bharat*)

"The General Problem Of East Bengal Is The Rescue Of Abducted Women--Bihar Situation Under Control". (*Ananda Bazar*)

"Bihar Is The Most Shameful Example Of Cruelty And Barbarism". (*Azad*)

The real crux of what Panditji said was that this dangerous situation must be ended and this could be done only if all together try to do that. Not one of these papers pointed this

out. Each took from Panditji's statement what suited its factional viewpoint and headlined only that.

And what is the way out of the riots which these papers suggest?

The nationalist *Bharat* wrote: "The nationalist Indian has pledged his all to free himself from the hands of British Imperialism, but he has never hated the British race. Then why do the British rulers today witness with indifference the greatest sufferings of Bengal and thus lower the prestige of the British in the eyes of the Indians?"

On October 9, the *Azad's* attitude was "The guarantee of peace can be the establishment of friendly and good relations with the majority community and not British bayonets."

But after Bihar it called a new tune: "In our opinion the Prime Minister (of Bihar) should be immediately removed and complete military administration established." (November 9).

Yet at the same time they were daily publishing reports of "military tyranny against innocent Muslims". This very *Azad* had earlier stated: "The miscreants must be severely punished ... (but) innocent people should not receive any punishment." (Editorial on Noakhali incidents: October 16).

This is the logical result of the factional preaching which these papers indulge in—shameless adoration of our imperialist enslaver.

57. Released Chittagong Armoury Raiders Work for Communal Harmony

Article, 'Bengal's revolutionary heroes battle for peace'. *People's Age*, 22 December 1946.

All over the riot affected areas of Bengal, the recently released pre-Reform (ex-terrorist) prisoners are fighting a hard battle for brotherly peace and for a joint front against our common enemies. The martyrdom of Lalmohan Sen first brought to the notice of our countrymen the work that they are doing.

Here are only a few glimpses of the vigorous anti-riot campaign that is being conducted by these revolutionary heroes.

Ambika Chakravarty has just returned from Chittagong after eight weeks of almost one continuous battle for Hindu-Muslim unity.

When he reached Chittagong with his other comrades, the Muslims were suspicious of them and the Hindus expected them to join forces against the Muslims. But their first meeting scotched these speculations. The Muslims came forward to receive them with open arms.

In Chittagong town itself, Leaguers welcomed them heartily. In the villages they had an overwhelming reception everywhere and at every place they got the biggest ovation when they called for Hindu-Muslim unity.

Allays Tension

On Bakri-Id Day, there was a feeling of tension at many places. Immediately Ambika Chakravarty went round these areas. Muslim kisans came to meet him in hundreds.

At one place, four to five hundred Muslims assembled for their prayers, waited for him despite his insistence that they should go on with their prayers, and after listening to him with rapt attention pledged: "Whatever happens, we won't let the riots come as long as we are alive."

Equally heartening was the response he received from the Hindus. At every village, young and old, men and women, literally besieged Ambikada and his comrades.

In his own village of Dewanpore, he met the entire village in a *baithak*. It was through him that once they had learnt about the Congress, as he was known as J.M. Sen Gupta's lieutenant.

He explained at length why he had joined the Red flag which stands for Hindu-Muslim unity against the British. They were so enthused that at the end of his talk, they decided to start regular day-to-day work, students to join the Students' Federation, kisans the Krishak Samity, and all remain with the Red flag.

Joint Meetings

Together with his other comrades, Ambikada held peace committee meetings (where both Hindu and Muslim leaders came and spoke of unity) at Gohira, Pahartali, Bagwan and many other villages. At places like Sripur, Kalisahar, Habilasdwip, Bidhugram, where Section 144 had not been extended to villages, joint meetings were held.

With the heightening of the tension after Noakhali the Armoury Raid comrades had to intervene in many cases. There is the story of one such case—that of Chittagong itself in Ambikada's own words: "The tension in Chittagong town was menacing. On the one side Muslim National Guards paraded the streets on horseback and took up an aggressive attitude. On the other hand some explosives were detected with some Hindus which roused wild rumours. At this point an anonymous leaflet (suspected by many to be issued by the Intelligence Branch spies) appeared in the name of the Congress with attacks on Muslims hinting that they would be taught a lesson by the revolutionaries."

"The Congress contradicted it. The Armoury Raiders were openly hinted at in rumours and talks as being connected with the explosives found. Immediately we issued a leaflet condemning these 'defence' measures and met Muslim leaders to help ease the situation. Throughout this crisis, we stressed that any defence to be real must be by both Hindus and Muslim jointly."

Feelings changed so much that Muslim leaders openly declared that they would see that Hindus were protected. And Hindus saw that the only possible defence lay in looking on the Muslims as brothers and not as foes. Even the District Magistrate who in the past was an ace Communist-baiter, today openly admits that Ambikada together with Ganesh Ghosh and Ananta Singh has brought peace to Chittagong.

Biraj Deb Returns

Biraj Deb returned early in October to his village at Kalikaccha in Jhamanbaria Subdivision in Tippera district, almost next door to the riot affected zone. Kalikaccha is a Hindu island with a number of Muslim villages all round.

From August 16, not only were Hindus and Muslims physically segregated, but tension was also growing. Hindu young men, backed by well-off big guns, thought in terms of 'building up defence' while panic seized the general body of the people. The Muslims thought that the Hindus were preparing to attack them.

At his reception, Biraj found speakers talking of 'defence' but he stressed that the only effective defence was joint Hindu-Muslim defence against riots. Some anti-Communists started attacking him for this.

The food position is serious in the village. So Biraj took up relief work, called a village elders' meeting to form a relief committee and secure relief stocks from the Government.

After Noakhali, panic increased. The common people began coming to Biraj and Sailen Bhattacharya, member of the BPCC who joined in this work for Hindu-Muslim unity.

Volunteer Force Formed

Immediately they organised meetings in different areas where Biraj again and again emphasised the need for united Hindu-Muslim resistance. Doubts had to be answered. But he fought patiently and unflinchingly and so a volunteer force was formed.

They went to Muslim villages and met Muslim elders, and the volunteer force became popular.

Meanwhile amidst the panic all round, the women of the villages were upset by all they heard about Noakhali. One day a young housewife faced Biraj with a question: "We have heard you are revolutionaries, but what are you doing to save us?"

Biraj called a women's meeting and over 300 came. Sailen Babu and Biraj spoke. This was followed by two more meetings and in the last one over 600 women came, including even *kaibartya* (fisher) women. Here too Biraj urged Hindu-Muslim unity and told the Hindu women to visit their Muslim neighbours.

In this manner his untiring efforts allayed tension and panic subsided. Placed in a lonesome island as it were, Biraj Deb with all the zeal of a true revolutionary has fought for brotherly peace and brought new conquests for the Red flag through service to the people.

58. Both Communities Visit M.K. Gandhi in Noakhali

Extracts from *Hindustan Standard*, 22 December 1946, describing M.K. Gandhi's stay with N.K. Bose at Srirampur, Noakhali, quoted in the above. Pyarelal; *Mahatma Gandhi: The Last Phase*, Vol. I; Ahmedabad, 1956, p. 395.

... He is friend of both the communities here.... Muslims and Hindus of the village do not hesitate to come to him to seek his help. He is their friend, philosopher and guide.... In his lonely life he tries to do everything himself ... cooking his own food....

59. Paddy Begun to be Harvested in Chandpur and Noakhali

Extracts from a printed report of the situation in Noakhali and Chandpur by Sanat Kumar Roy Choudhury and Makhan Lall Biswas of the Bengal Provincial Hindu Mahasabha; undated. File No. C-132; All India Hindu Mahasabha Papers (1946); Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

Tour Impressions of Sanat Kumar Roy Chowdhury and Makhan Lall Biswas on Noakhali and Chandpur Situation

4. The harvesting in Chandpur side is complete. Harvesting was done not by Government agency or through Government officials but mostly by the parties themselves. But no adequate crops have been received as the crops have been (a) taken away or (b) used as fodder for cattle by the looters.

In Noakhali area the harvesting is being done by Government. The officers appointed for the purpose are Mussalmans. They insist on documentary proof of the Hindu claimants' title

which cannot be produced, documents having being burnt along with their houses. The actual harvesting is done by Muslim labour appointed by the officers who do not care if along with them some unauthorised people come and cut away and remove part of the crops.

We were told of a typical instance where out of an estimated yield of 40 maunds of paddy the owner received exactly 11 maunds.

Another method of taking away crops is prevalent. Instead of cutting paddy the looters merely pluck away the ripe grains leaving the plants standing, so that on cutting scarcely any paddy is harvested. Parties who have harvested their crops have no place to store them in, they are forced to sell the harvested paddy to the local Mussalmans at a very cheap price. This deprives them of the means of subsistence and organisation. [Those] who want to repatriate cannot do so unless they can supply rations till the next crops, i.e., September 1947....

7. In spite of Mahatma Gandhi's efforts and the paper exhortation of the Chief Minister, the Mussalman mind had remained unmoved. They are determined that none but Mussalman will be allowed to live in the artificial Pakistan that they have created by their depredations....

60. Heavy Influx of Refugees from Bihar Causes Tensions

Extracts from Paragraphs for Monthly Summary for the Cabinet; 14 January 1947.
File No. 5/12/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

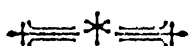
BENGAL (First and Second Halves of December)

Dacca

There was marked deterioration in the situation and during the 24 hours from 3 p.m. on 1st December there were as many instances of murder and arson as in the whole of October. The number of daily incidents has decreased but the first outbreak was accompanied by a series of attacks on an unprecedented scale upon places of religious worship. The Moharrum processions were carried through peacefully as a result of the very stringent precautions taken. The situation is outwardly much quieter though tension, distrust and suspicion still continue.

Burdwan Division

There is communal tension in Birbhum district while in Burdwan there is great uneasiness due to the influx of Bihar refugees numbering about 20,000 scattered over seven different camps. The refugees are not destitute but have personal luggage and cash and the local authorities are in considerable doubt how long they intend to stay. There has been no report of any incidents though reductions in the raising of coal are resulting from colliery labour absenting themselves from work through panic caused by the influx of refugees. Their presence is increasing communal tension as illustrated by a great increase in the number of applications for revolvers which are being consistently refused. A very slight tendency has been noted in the second half of December for refugees to leave Asansol and return to their homes in Bihar though this has not affected the total number to any great extent.



4.ii BIHAR

1. Newspapers Blamed for Worsening Situation in Bihar

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Bihar for the second half of June 1946. File No. 18/6/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Communal

Fortunately the communal riot which was mentioned in the last report did not spread. Although there was a good deal of uneasiness in the locality, the presence of a large body of armed police prevented any further breaches of the peace. In the early stages the press were restrained in their comments, but they were not so later on when both the *Searchlight* and the *Indian Nation* accused the police of indiscriminate arrest of Hindus.... The Muslim League paper *Dawn* had a leader on the subject in which it demanded the infliction of punitive police, collective fines, etc., on the Hindus in the area.

That the communal situation is deteriorating is evident from the fact that two instances occurred in which communal feelings were aroused over ordinary disputes in a cinema. In one case a Muhammadan boy was pushed out of a cinema by an employee who happened to be a Hindu and this resulted in a crowd of 200 Muhammadans marching towards the cinema. In the other, in Monghyr town there was an altercation over a seat in which one man, who has not since been traced, was assaulted. Mischievous persons spread the rumour that this incident had a communal background and the result was that 4 Muhammadans, who were providing music for the *tilak* ceremony in a Hindu family, were brutally assaulted by a mob of Hindus and one of them lost his life.

2. Muslim League's Belligerence Worries Nationalist Muslims

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Bihar for the second half of June 1946. File No. 18/9/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Muslim Affairs

As already indicated, it is not known what form 'direct action' is likely to take and there is a feeling that the Muslim League are not prepared to go to any great lengths. However, whatever their intention may be, there is always the danger that, if the order for 'direct action' is given, it will deteriorate into a communal massacre, and from some districts it is reported that the nationalist Muslims are particularly apprehensive of attack by Muslim Leaguers.

Attempts are being made to stimulate enrolment to the Muslim League National Guard. While in some districts the number of volunteers enlisted have been appreciable, reports indicate that, on the whole, there is great lack of trained *salars* to instruct the recruits. Political speeches after Friday prayers are becoming common and violent speeches continue to be made, to the congregations in mosques. There is also undoubtedly surreptitious collection of lethal weapons and although a number of recoveries have been made as a result of the vigilance of local officers, it is difficult to get reliable information. It is thought possible that, when the Provincial Legislature reassembles, the Muslim League members will not cooperate and will not attend any of the Standing or Select Committees.

Communal

There has been no relaxation of communal tension which is kept alive by rumours to a very great extent. The slightest petty incidents, many of which have no communal colour at all, have to be dealt with promptly and firmly in order to avoid an outbreak of communal rioting. As has been indicated in earlier reports, the press has a big responsibility in this matter. Good work of local officials and public-spirited nonofficials is largely nullified by the communal poison which is dished up to the public by many of the newspapers, both inside and outside the province, and, as one Commissioner observes, "the freedom of the press has degenerated into license and sensation mongering." In spite of this, there has been no major incident up till now, the worst being the murder of a Muslim *goonda* who was attacked when returning to Dinapore from Patna on an *ekka* by a small party. He was seriously injured and soon afterwards died in hospital. Some Muslims rode into Patna City on a truck crying out that communal rioting had started and 4 Muslims were slightly injured as a result. The police took prompt action and order was quickly restored. The funeral of the murdered Mohammadan gave rise to anxiety as the relations of the deceased wished to take the body in a procession to the burial ground. However a solution was eventually reached through the good officers of the Executive Officer of the Dinapore Cantonment who allowed the body to be buried in an old graveyard near the house of the deceased within the cantonment area where burials are not ordinarily now allowed.

3. Rumours Lead to Killings and Arson in Muzaffarpur

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Bihar for the second half of September 1946. File No. 18/9/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Communal

Tension still prevails in many parts of the province and came to a head in a village of Muzaffarpur district when a number of Muslims were killed and their houses were burnt. The incident arose on account of a rumour that a Bengali girl had been brought from Calcutta by a Muhammadan of the village concerned. Unfortunately a police truck which was taking a Magistrate and armed police to the village broke down on the way with the result that they did not arrive until after the incident had occurred. It appears that the girl had in fact embraced Islam and was regularly married to the Muhammadan. This incident has naturally increased the tension throughout the province. This is particularly unfortunate as local officers had noticed a marked improvement in parts of the province and even in the town of Gaya, which is noted for its recent history of communal trouble, Hindus and Muslims freely helped one another and cooperated in connection with the relief measures following the recent floods.

4. Hartal in Chapra Saran Against Noakhali Events Leads to Riots

Telegram from 'Bihar, Ranchi' [sic] to 'Homein, New Delhi' [Intelligence Bureau, Home Department, Government of India]; Ranchi, 26 October 1946. File No. 5/52/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Communal riot occurred in Chapra Saran District on 25th afternoon following total *hartal* as mark of sympathy with Noakhali victims. So far casualty reported 20 killed and forty injured,

two more being killed by police who were compelled to open fire on several occasions. Riot started with exchange of brickbats followed by number of stabbing incidents. There has been good deal of arson but not much [indecipherable]. Situation not yet fully under control but local forces strengthened by one company Gurkha rifles and three companies armed Police. One [indecipherable] Mounted Military Police being sent. Further communication will follow.

5. Bihar Government Admits Riots Caught it Unprepared

Extracts from a news report, 'Nearly four hundred killed in Bihar'. *Free Press Journal*, 4 November 1946.

Patna, November 3. Between 300 to 400 persons have been killed in the communal disturbances throughout the province so far, according to Mr Anugrah Narain Sinha, Finance Minister, Bihar.

Mr Sinha who has visited most of the riot affected areas stated in an interview here today that the large number of deaths reported were attributable to panic. So far some parts of Saran, Patna and Bhagalpur districts were affected by communal disturbances. The latest information received by the authorities was that the border areas of Gaya District were likely to be disturbed. In the Bhagalpur District rural areas had been affected.

Mr Sinha stated that it was correct to state that many houses had been burnt down in the riot affected areas after the population had evacuated them. Many instances had come to his notice where Hindu neighbours had given shelter to Muslims and had tried to conceal them against outside attacks. Whenever they had felt unable to defend their Muslim neighbours they had tried to conceal them in an effort to enable them to evacuate at the earliest opportunity.

Taken by Surprise

Mr Sinha maintained that the riots were local and spontaneous and certainly not organised. He could not give any exact reason for mob frenzy but it appeared to him that the Bengal incident had deep repercussions on the population of Bihar and certain agents provocateurs had also been carrying on nefarious propaganda. Government had not been able to spot them yet but they intended to deal with them with the utmost severity the moment they were found out.

Government did not realise in the beginning, Mr Sinha added, that the trouble would spread in the manner it did. Therefore whatever forces Government had at their disposal were sent immediately to places from where reports of disturbances came. But when that appeared inadequate they called in the military to aid the civil administration.

Military Lukewarm?

Patna town was now quite safe, said Mr Sinha. Government were controlling the situation and giving shelter to those who sought it. Military had been posted now at all strategic centres. Police protection had been extended to evacuees.

Government were hopeful that within three or four days they would be able to bring the entire situation under control.

The Government expected more energetic cooperation from the military authorities after the visit of the Viceroy and other members of the Interim Government.

Among towns only Bhagalpur and Chapra had been affected but they were quiet now, stated Mr Sinha about 50 villages had been affected in Patna district.

6. 300 Reported Killed in One Village in South Monghyr

Extracts from a telegram by the Governor's Secretary, Bihar, to the Secretary to Governor-General, Public Department, Government of India; 5 November 1946. File No. 5/52/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

... Rioting during last few days in south Monghyr has been very serious. In one village alone 300 persons are reported killed. Women and children have been attacked and there have been several cases of rape. Moslems are reported to have attacked Hindu villages but details are lacking. There was a communal riot in Banka south of Bhagalpur yesterday in which 1 Moslem was killed. Situation is tense in Jehanabad in north Gaya and troops have been sent. Further military reinforcements are expected shortly.

7. Troops Help Contain Trouble in Bihar

Extracts from a news report, 'Situation in Bihar still serious'. *Free Press Journal*, 6 November 1946.

Patna, November 5. "While most parts of the province remain quiet, tension continues to be acute in some districts. The situation in parts of Patna, Gaya and Monghyr districts is causing serious anxiety. More troops arrived last night and were despatched immediately to the affected areas. As a result of the Defence Member's visit to Patna today more troops will be available for operation in Bihar," says a Bihar Government press note.

"Patna town is quiet. Isolated cases of arson were observed in outlying villages southwest of Patna. Troops in cooperation with the police opened fire on a rowdy mob, killing seven and injuring three."

"Four deaths occurred as a result of stabbing in Bihar Shariff. Patrolling by troops and police continues."

"On Nov. 3, a serious tragedy occurred in village Telhara Kangarsarai, where 150 persons are reported to have been killed including one Assistant Inspector of Police. Six constables are reported missing. The report of 25 deaths comes from village Nina in the same area."

Gaya Quiet

"The town is all quiet, but tension is unabated in areas near Jehanabad. More troops have been despatched to the affected areas."

"Bhagalpur: An isolated case of stabbing was reported. Seven dead bodies of persons murdered previously were recovered."

"The situation in Tarapur and Kharagpur areas of Monghyr district is reported to be very serious. Cases of murder and arson are reported from villages Lahanpur and the adjoining locality. The casualties are believed to be heavy. Details are awaited."

"No further incidents are reported from Santhal Parganas."

Hindus Protect Muslims

"In the midst of gloom a heartening report comes from Dinapore subdivision of Patna district. The Hon. Mr Q. Ansari, Minister for PWD, who toured extensively in Dinapur subdivision yesterday found that a large number of villages had formed joint defence with parties of Hindu and Muslim residents as a precaution against outside aggression."

"In village Sarai, when a large mob of hooligans attempted to raid the village, the Hindus did not allow their Muslim co-villagers to come to the fore and heroically fought and drove away the miscreants; mutual confidence was so marked all over this area that the Muslims refused an offer to be evacuated. At some meeting which the PWD Minister attended, the Hindus took a solemn pledge to protect their neighbours against all danger."

8. Hindus of Patna District Protest Against Military Firing

Bihar Governor's telegram to Viceroy; 9 November 1946. File No. 5/52/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

... Patna district is now in hand and though a false report of 600 casualties from military firing in one instance has caused excitement among Patna Hindus and Nehru's addressing a meeting of students yesterday was roughly handled. Disturbances in Tarapur area of east Monghyr have subsided but in Tarapur and adjacent villages dead are reliably reported to be about 700. In west Monghyr the situation is still confused. Fresh outbreaks have occurred in south Bhagalpur. In one village 13 Moslems have been killed. Total casualties from military firing were stated yesterday to be less than 200; from police firing they are believed not to exceed 80.

9. Police Fails to Control Situation in Bihar

News report, 'Bihar follows Noakhali'. *People's Age*, 10 November 1946.

November 4. For the past four days arson, loot and murder in Chapra District have practically ceased, and the situation is returning to normal.

Estimates of casualties vary from a hundred injured according to the latest official bulletin, to a thousand killed and many injured according to the Patna correspondent of the League organ, *Dawn*, who, however, brought out wild stories about the riot without actually going to any one of the affected villages.

No attempt has been made to estimate the loss of property, which must run into several lakhs.

Even the guarded reports that have appeared in the Congressite dailies—*Searchlight* and *Rashtravani*—give a horrid picture of the carnage and brutalities, that have characterised these frenzied mob attacks on the Muslim population in half a dozen villages.

"Fiendishness has known no bounds and a veritable massacre of innocents has taken place," remarks the *Searchlight* (November 3).

A large number of Muslims have left the affected villages and have gone to their relations in safety areas or to the town of Chapra. A refugee camp has been opened in Chapra Zilla School, where nearly 4000 Muslims from the Hindu majority mohallas of the town, as well as from some villages are taking shelter. The Muslim mohallas of the town are also packed with refugees.

Cases of rape and abduction have not been reported but in several villages the heads of Muslims have been shaved and only pigtails left.

Dacoit Paradise

Loot and arson have been common features of these mob attacks, and goonda elements and village dacoits have taken full advantage of this situation.

I have received reports of several cases in which the same mob looted Hindu houses also, after it had pillaged peaceful Muslim homes.

In Jalalpur village, after Muslims had been looted, the same mob looted houses of three Hindu *baniyas*, who had taken a leading hand in organising the attack.

In Chapra town, Muslim as well as Hindu ration shops were looted. And the Chapra correspondent of *Rashtravani* reports that in Parsa Thana regular gangs of dacoits have been formed who have started burgling Hindu, as well as Muslim homes and stealing standing crops from the fields belonging to Hindu and Muslim landlords.

From my talks with a number of Congress and League leaders of the District and from reports gained on the spot, I was able to learn how the carnage started.

Mutual hate has grown so far that even the office-bearers of the town Congress Committee and Muslim League helped in the fomenting of trouble by their rabid propaganda.

Worst on Top

The worst elements—hoarders, black marketeers and Hindu Sabha communalists—came to the top in the Town Congress Committee. They roused hate sentiments, and when Noakhali Day was observed on October 25, it became the signal for riots which soon spread to rural areas.

It was a shame to see that among those who actively participated in rioting in Chapra, together with the common goondas and loafers with criminal past, were members of the Azad Hind Volunteer Corps and the Muslim National Guard.

But behind all this instigation were the connivance and active assistance of the police and the bureaucracy.

I could quote numerous instances in which police sub-inspectors actually instigated the rioters (and only one of them has been suspended so far). But I will give here revealing facts about the higher officials themselves.

The Deputy Inspector-General of Police, Blewitt, boss of North Bihar, who came to Chapra after the outbreak of the riots, visited Mohalla Carimohal on the 27th and assured the Muslims that adequate forces had arrived and there was no fear of attack.

But within twenty minutes of his departure a mob of nearly one thousand attacked. These people must have been collecting under the very nose of this bloated chief who was giving such facile assurances.

Blind Eye

A Muslim official held a mohalla meeting and instigated the Muslims to riot. When this fact was reported to the police chief and the guilty official began to apologize, Blewitt quickly dismissed the whole affair saying: "Let bygones be bygones".

The Superintendent of Police, Mullick, saw a Hindu mob setting fire to Muslim houses and even fired a shot from his revolver but then quietly withdrew to his bungalow, making no police arrangements for checking such lawlessness.

On October 25, the day on which the riots started, the police were withdrawn and even after the outbreak of riots, the police force available from the local police lines was not used.

The role of the Magistrate was even more criminal. The entire administration stood paralysed when the riots broke out, although everybody knew that tension was continuing for over a month or so.

Not to speak of police measures, there was a total collapse of the rationing system and the Municipal administration came to a standstill as soon as the riots started. The officials did precious little, except wasting petrol by running about from one place to another.

In one case, rice from Government godowns was not issued. The people threatened to break the locks open.

In the refugees camp cholera has broken out. The officials could not be persuaded to make some arrangements for sanitation.

People's Heroism

But against this sordid tale of inefficiency, corruption and riot-mongering, stand out stories of those handfuls of Congress leaders who worked day and night to check the riots.

Under the leadership of Syt Girish Tewari they went to all affected areas and persuaded angry mobs to disperse.

The heroism and the good sense of the common people was responsible for saving a large number of lives in the most difficult circumstances.

In village Nagraj for example a local gentleman named Narbadeshwar Pande threw himself between two angry mobs and ultimately succeeded in turning them back.

A Muslim Hakim, Khuda Baksh, had his brother slaughtered before his own eyes. But in the night he found a Hindu boy belonging to one of the murderers' families taking shelter in his house. He fed and kept the boy for the night and sent him back with an escort, the next morning.

In Chapra, a number of Hindus faced angry mobs of their own community for the crime of giving shelter to their Muslim neighbours. Among them are three Communists of Dalhawa who organised the joint defence of their Mohalla.

Red Flag Against Riots

The Communists also led the railway colony of Chapra, which remained completely immune from riots and where Hindus and Muslims continued to live in adjoining houses and work in the same shed and on the same trains.

Similarly, the big railway town of Sonapur, with its adjoining villages successfully held the flag of brotherly unity aloft and Hindu and Muslim workers and peasants beat back all attempts at provocation.

In Sabaichak village, for example, a Muslim landlord wanted to organise his coreligionists for rioting, but they gave him a fitting rebuff. Sons of Muslim kisans, who are demobbed army men, have raised a joint kisan volunteer corps and are giving it lathi and other training.

Wherever the Red flag has been planted the monster of communal riots has not been permitted to raise its ugly face.

10. Ban on the Wearing of Uniforms by Private Volunteer Organisations

Bihar Governor's telegram to the Viceroy; 12 November 1946. File No. 5/52/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

I have today with approval of my Prime Minister issued an Ordinance under Section 88 reproducing Defence of India Rules 53 and 59 and giving powers to Provincial Government to control drilling of and wearing of uniforms by private volunteer organisations. This is necessary to prevent Muslim League and Hindu Sabha volunteers from parading streets in a truculent manner and disturbing public confidence....

11. Precensorship of the Local Press

Extracts from telegram by Bihar Governor's Secretary to the Private Secretary, Viceroy; 16 November 1946. File No. 5/52/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

... Precensor[ship] of local press is about to be imposed. No reduction of military forces is contemplated before Muharram festival in first week of December. I propose to discontinue daily reports unless anything important occurs.

12. Casualties Inflicted in Suppression of Riots in North Bihar

Extracts from Joint Operations and Intelligence Room Report No. G4, 17 November, 1946. File No. 5/52/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Total casualties inflicted by tps [troops] in North Bihar up to 0600 hrs 8 Nov.

Firing:	22 occasions
Killed:	298
Wounded:	75

Casualties in North Bihar disturbances reported by Mr Ahmad, DIG, CID, Bihar as

Killed:	3272
Wounded:	438

13. Jawaharlal Nehru Moved to Tears by Refugees' Plight

Article, 'Who set Bihar alight?' *People's Age*, 17 November 1946.

Communal carnage has enveloped a fairly wide area in Bihar. While the situation in Chapra cooled down, a large part of Patna and a fairly big area covering Gaya, Monghyr, Bhagalpur, Santhal Parganas is in the grip of communal frenzy.

Party leaders and Government officials, together with public workers and police and military are frantically grappling with the situation but all is not well everywhere.

No estimate of total casualties or the total number of refugees is yet possible. Speaking two days ago, the Finance Minister estimated the total number of killed at three to four hundred, which was an underestimate even at that time.

Now it is feared that the figure has been multiplied manyfold. On the same date, the Finance Minister observed that nearly 400 houses have been set on fire in Patna District alone. For the whole of the Province this figure must run into several thousands.

Estimates of the total number of refugees gathered in Patna varies from 4000 to 14,000 -- according to Government and League sources respectively. That was two days ago.

Today the *Indian Nation* reports that over 10,000 special ration cards have been issued for refugees in Patna.

The number of refugees sheltering in mofussil towns or marooned in riot affected villages must also be considerable.

On a rough estimate the total area affected would come to something between 500 and 1000 square miles.

Behind the Riots

- The forces that have swung the common people into this mad wave of fratricidal war are not too far to be seen. The Calcutta riots and the Noakhali carnage of course had their influence. But the resultant sense of indignation was systematically led into communal channels by interested and communal politicians.

Most provocative editorials were written, for example by the *Searchlight*, and even Gandhiji's and Syt Kripalani's statements were distorted. Finally came Noakhali Day (October 24 to 27) and this became the signal for rioting.

Hindu Sabhaites, Arya Samajis, profiteers and zamindars, who have recently entrenched themselves inside the Congress organisation, exploited its fair name to aid their nefarious propaganda.

A host of printed, cyclostyled and typewritten sheets were brought out, inciting Hindus to revenge Noakhali in Bihar. Some of these illegal handbills included items like the mass burning of Muslim houses, looting of their property and murder and assault.

Black Marketeers

In Chapra town, for example, notorious black marketeers who now wield some influence in the Town Congress Committee, are said to have become the actual leaders and organisers of the riot.

In Gaya District, similarly notorious zamindars are said to be prominent among those who have freely distributed money and arms to selected bands of goondas who initiated the riots.

This way they planned to disrupt the mounting wave of the anti-landlord kisan upsurge and divert it into disruptive channels.

While the riot-mongers were actively preparing for this great slaughter, the Ministry together with the Congress Committees were complacent and did almost nothing till the storm burst over their heads.

The Finance Minister, Anugraha Narain Sinha admitted their complacency in so many words when he stated on November 5, that "the Government had not realised in the beginning that the trouble would spread in the manner it did."

All that the Ministry did in the beginning was to arm the bureaucracy with extraordinary powers of repression and threaten the officials concerned with punishment, in case they failed to check the riot.

This complacency was shaken when the Chapra riots assumed rather serious proportions. Two of the Ministers rushed to that District.

While the situation was brought under control in Chapra largely due to the untiring efforts of a band of patriotic Congressmen led by Sjt Girish Tewari, a general flare-up developed in Maurhi and Barh areas of Patna District, and this has now spread to three other districts.

On his return from Chapra, the Premier is reported to have desperately appealed for military help to Brigadier Goadby, the Sub-Area Commander stationed at Dinapore.

This Army chieftain is said to have replied that he did not think the situation as serious as in August 1942, and that civil administration was not paralysed. The Inspector General of Police agreed with Brigadier Goadby and assured the Premier that his police would soon bring the situation under control.

Having thus failed to secure any military help from the Brigadier, the Premier is reported to have rung up the Governor, who was snugly away in Ranchi. Somebody from the Governor's

staff gave the curt reply that His Excellency was about to fly to Bombay and put down the receiver rudely.

Military Delays

Next day the Premier and Dr Syed Mahmud flew to Ranchi and are understood to have contacted the Area Commander, who is reported to have promised help but gave no definite idea of the number of troops he could provide or when. Then this old General is reported to have slyly made the suggestion that the Communist Party was at the back of the riots!

Finally a small number of troops, mainly Indian, were made available from November 2, but by that time the riot flames had spread to newer and newer areas.

Thus denial of military help at the proper time has become the common subject of conversation in Patna's political circles, and the Congressite daily *Searchlight* expressed its indignation thus: "We doubt if military cooperation is available in the fullest degree.... Our impression is that all kinds of technicalities have been trotted out and have stood in the way of swift action."

The paper also condemned the deliberate absence of the Governor from the Province at this critical time. (November 5)

Tragic Scenes

It was in this situation that the four members of the Interim Government came to Patna on their way back from Calcutta. They went to hospitals and visited the refugee camp in Anjuman Islamia Hall where the Provincial League office is situated. Refugees caught Pandit Nehru by his hand and fell at his feet and narrated their tale of woe in a manner that moved Panditji so deeply that tears trickled down his cheeks.

Panditji decided to stay on in Bihar and began to tour the affected areas.

Lorry loads of wounded and refugees are pouring into Patna and other mofussil towns.

In some places, frenzied mobs refused to listen to Congressmen who are now moving out in an effort to stop the riot. Consequently orders for large-scale shooting are reported to have been given.

Bombing and machinegunning from the air are also being discussed.

A section of the Muslim League leadership is seeking to utilise this communal crisis for its petty ends. Talk of forcing a Section 93 Rule on the Province is going the rounds in these reactionary circles and they are planning to bring about the eventuality in the most diabolical manner.

Not only are actual refugees being brought to Patna but Muslim populations of safe areas like Khurupore also have been persuaded to migrate.

14. Bihar's Fight Against Communal Frenzy

Article, 'Bihar fights riots'. *People's Age*, 24 November 1946.

Bihar has been through hell. But out of that hell, from village after village have come stories of the heroism of stalwart warriors of freedom—who threw their whole might into the battle against the madness of communal frenzy.

They risked their own lives to save their brothers were threatened with death. But they saved more than the lives of their brothers. These heroes saved Indian patriotism itself, they showed the world that, they lie, who say we are all turned to beasts, that we are irreconcilably

divided. India lives, her battle against Imperialism shall not be directed into civil war, as long as men like [these] heroes of Bihar live.

On November 1, two separate conflagrations started at two different ends of south Monghyr District; at Barahiya in the northwest and at Tarapur in the southeast. Two passenger trains were held up by a mob at Barahiya Station and certain passengers were stabbed.

A riotous gang soon came into being which actually ravaged a few villages, but their depredations were stopped soon partly due to the activities of local Congressmen and partly due to the vigilance of Lakhanlal Singh, Secretary, Monghyr District Kisan Sabha.

A local zamindar began to incite his villagers to form a mob and raid the nearby villages. One day he actually gathered a large number of people round him. But, then Lakhanlal came to the spot and exposed the game of the British Imperialists and their agents, the zamindars, in fomenting the riots.

The kisans were convinced and returned to their homes. The zamindar too had to give up his plans and was compelled to sit quietly at home.

From, the next day, Lakhanlal started to work for the defence of his area. He formed peace squads of Red flag militants, who moved from village to village, exhorting the people to quench the fire of communal frenzy, as and when it was ignited.

One day, one of the squads had to face a mob which burnt and pillaged a house in Bahuara and was now looting houses in village Nijay. The squad stopped the mob from doing further mischief and thus saved Nijay from being destroyed.

Heroic Congressmen

Thus while the flare-up from the Barahiya end was soon brought under control, that from the Tarapurend spread like wildfire and engulfed the eastern part of south Monghyr and the adjoining western part of south Bhagalpur District.

In this area, Communist influence is very weak and during the elections, the Communist candidate Karyanand Sharma polled only 200 votes from the three thanas of this belt as against over 16,000 polled by the Congress candidate Babu Srikrishan Sinha, the Bihar Premier.

A number of Congressmen made heroic efforts to fight the conflagration. Sjt Benarsi Prasad Singh, till recently manager of *Rishtravani* (Premier Srikrishana Sinha's Hindi daily), gathered together a band of brave Rajputs and defended Garhe (Kharagpur Thana) and some adjoining villages for two days.

They heroically repulsed successive waves of marauders. This made such an impression upon the minority community that they chose not to evacuate the area and are still safe there.

Another Congress leader Ramcharan Mehta came out fearlessly in defence of his locality. The mob threatened to kill him and pointed a spear at his chest but he refused to be cowed down.

He not only successfully defended his village, Naogarh, but actually turned it into a relief camp to which refugees from the adjoining villages were brought and where they are being kept.

Guno Singh & Mohammad Ali

Turkasingarpur village was attacked by a mob. Some of its houses were set on fire. There are two Red flaggers in the village: Sheikh Mohammad Ali and Guno Singh.

The latter was not in the village at the time of the pillage. Mohammad Ali fought back as best as he could and for some time refused to leave the village, though he was persuaded to do so.

Finally the mob attacked him and he was forced to escape from the village with his family.

In the meanwhile Guno Singh returned. He called the villagers together, told them what a wrong had been committed and with them went out and brought back Mohammad Ali and his family and other refugees.

Now Guno Singh and Mohammad Ali together guard the village with a band of young men and are carrying on an extensive campaign for the return of all looted property.

Bhola of Lakhiserai

Lakhiserai is a town which is one of the centres of this belt in which Communist influence is weak. Taking advantage of prevailing tension, the goonda gang got active and set fire to two or three houses and murdered a few passersby. Muslims collected in one area and Hindus were left in another.

One day both Hindus and Muslims came out armed with deadly weapons and a clash seemed imminent.

Just when one of the mobs was preparing to attack, the local Communist leader Bhola dashed from the Communist Party office and stood before the mob. Agent[s] provocateur[s] incited the mob against Bhola and several spears were actually pointed against him.

But Bhola stood firm and declared that he was not afraid of death. He told the crowd that it could march to the area of the other community only over his dead body.

The crowd now wavered and a few people began to support Bhola. Seeing their game being foiled, the provocateurs spread the lie that Bhola's own village, a mile away, had been attacked and his brother killed.

Bhola heard the news quietly and calmly and said he would go to his village later but just then he would not allow the loss of a single life. Ultimately he won and the crowd dispersed.

Defending the Villages

In Laxmipore village lying on the eastern fringe of this belt, the local kisan leader Ramrup Mahto organised a joint volunteer squad of Hindu and Muslim kisan boys who several times rebuffed different gangs of riot mongers. Kisans still guard the village, over which the Red flag proudly flies.

Billouri is a Red village nearly three miles to the west of Lakhiserai. Its Communist leader Chandra Deo was out in Calcutta working in a jute mill. Other workers of this area, also working in Calcutta's jute mills, put in an application to the Bengal Committee of the Communist Party urging that Chandra Deo be immediately sent home to organise the defence of his area.

Chandra Deo has saved this whole belt by organising them against the goonda gangs.

The whole of Chanan Pargana, the old kisan base of veteran Communist kisan leader Pandit Karyanand Sharma though dangerously close to the storm centre on the east, maintained fraternal peace, and not one of its nearly two dozen villages suffered from a single case of arson, murder and [looting?].

In Pakaribarawan Thana of Gaya District, Communist kisan leader Bishnudeo Singh divided a band of one hundred and fifty Red Guards into different squads which toured the whole area and kept the kisans' attention rivetted to the coming battle for the *agahani* harvest which Gaya zamindars were conspiring to grab by setting Hindu kisan against their Muslim brethren.

Village Defence Committees were formed, joint patrolling was done and no incident took place.

In Arwal Thana of the same District, which lies only a few miles away from the tragic centre of Taregna (Masaurhi), Keshari Sharan, beloved hero of August 42 who came over to communism while in jail started his work with eight villages, which were strongly behind the Kisan Sabha.

Village defence committees were formed, village patrolling fixed up and then two hundred kisan boys volunteered to move into the rest of the thana. People belonging to other parties and groups cooperated and the whole thana was saved.

In Dinapore Subdivision a large crowd of 20,000 people incited and organised by a local zamindar, marched towards Bahpura and seven other villages with a mixed Hindu-Muslim population. All the villagers—both Hindus and Muslims—came out in a body armed with whatever weapons they could get and stood before the attacking mob forcing them to disperse.

These snapshots are only a few out of the wealth of heroism which Bihar has seen in the midst of the inferno of civil war.

Numerous rescue parties, organised by the Congress, the Forward Block, the INA, by medical students and others, worked day and night to fight the riots at grave risk to themselves.

It was all these and the indomitable patriotic kisans and workers of Bihar who kept the flag of patriotism flying when the rest of Bihar was drowned in anti-national frenzy.

15. How the Riots Spread, According to the Communist Party

Extracts from an article, 'Punish the devils'. *People's Age*, 24 November 1946.

... Some days ago trouble started in one of the districts, and the people sought help from the Superintendent of Police. This White officer refused bluntly and said: "What is the use of sending police now. The situation is still not dangerous."

This fact has been brought to the notice of Pandit Nehru.

"You Want Us to Quit"

News has been received that only two miles away from a village where 150 persons were killed, a military unit was stationed. On getting information of the impending attack on the village, a Magistrate of this area and a Forward Block leader approached the unit commander for help. But this gentleman refused to stir out of the station during the night. When reminded of the Premier's instructions that the military officials should at once give help whenever necessity arose, the insolent commander replied: "Get away I care a damn for your Ministry."

And the next day when he was informed of the big massacre that resulted from his refusal to send help, he taunted the Indian Police Superintendent: "And you want us to quit in 6 months!"

When riots broke out in Jamalpur, some clerks approached a British officer of the railway workshop and asked him to close the workshop for the present. The officer replied: "I shall do nothing. You think I have forgotten 1942?"

The officials were the ones who allowed the riots to spread. Who fostered them directly?

It has been proved about Chapra that the biggest part in spreading riots there has been played by the profiteers and black marketeers.

Reports received from other districts also prove that almost at every place the black marketeers and the zamindars took the lead in this slaughter.

In Masaurhi (Patna district) where one thousand lives were lost, the local rice and flour mill proprietors organised the rioters. It is said the mill sirens were used for collecting and dispersing the rioters.

It may be remembered that these are the biggest food thieves in Bihar. The people of this area and even the children of the peasants hate the mill owners. And today these very people have become leaders of the kisans by spreading the communal fire.

Riot Conferences

It is reported that the President of the Gaya Congress Committee, Shri Satrugnasaran Sinha, has informed some members of the Ministry that the riots in Gaya were the creation of the zamindars.

The zamindars held conferences a few days prior to the actual breaking out of the riots and it is surmised that preparations for rioting were made in those very conferences.

In Jehanabad, the zamindars held their conference on October 8. The riots began from the very next day, bursting out into mass slaughter from the very start.

In Nawada the zamindars' conference took place on November 1. Riot started from the 2nd.

In Aurangabad, the zamindars' conference took place on November 5. Complete preparations for rioting had been made on the 6th. But by then the leaders and the military reached the place and the situation could not take a bad turn.

Shri Satrugnasaran Sinha is reported to have told the authorities from the very beginning that these conferences of the zamindars should be stopped, but they did not pay any heed to this.

Zamindars Hand Out Arms

News from many other areas says that the zamindars themselves distributed arms to the goondas.

For instance, in Gaya, arms were supplied by a big zamindar and a Hindu Sabhaite leader and a well-known *mahant*.

A zamindar of Pandul Gaya, named Sachoo Singh, has been actually arrested by the police for organising people for rioting.

A warrant of arrest is reported to have been issued against the *Mahant* of Loghar for the same reason.

The game of the zamindars was very simple.

They knew that the Provincial Ministry had accepted the decision to abolish the zamindari system. They also knew that they had ruined the kisans of Bihar, and that unlike the previous years, the kisans were not ready this time to die of hunger and disease.

Face the Murderers

This is why the zamindars set the Bihar countryside on fire. By this one trick these bloodthirsty zamindars have become leaders of the kisans.

Those who had to don Gandhi caps to hide their sins, have now come in the open as the protectors of Hinduism; and some kisans, mad with the poison of communalism, have started following them.

In the zamindars' conference also, held in Patna under the presidentship of the Maharajadhiraj of Darbhanga, some zamindars had suggested that in order to retain their feudal stranglehold they should make the kisans and *khet mazdoors* (village landless labourers) fight among themselves.

16. Communist Criticism of League and Congress Reportage on Bihar

Article, 'League press on Bihar'. *People's Age*, 24 November 1946.

When the horror of Noakhali occurred, the League press complained that the Congress press was indulging in gross exaggeration; and while condemning the atrocities committed there and disassociating itself from it, the League press generally tried to explain it away. Thus the *Dawn* wrote on October 18:

"Disturbances in East Bengal and other areas are perhaps the natural aftermaths of the great Calcutta carnage which was of the Hindus' making. Such disturbances, though regrettable can be rationally explained also as sequels to repeated outrages in Hindu majority areas, where innocent Muslims have been victims, and the latest instance of which occurred in the Bihar village of Benlabad."

Criminal 'Theory'

This theory of riots in one place being the "natural aftermath" of riots in another, and "though regrettable, but can be rationally explained" was written and propounded just about a week before the general, large-scale Bihar disturbances broke out.

Now it is the turn of Mr Srikrishna Sinha, the Bihar Premier, and the Congress press generally, to say about Bihar what the League papers were saying about Noakhali in the reverse order, namely, that Bihar though regrettable was the "natural aftermath" of Noakhali, that it could be "rationally explained", etc.

In reality, however, both the sides try to justify, explain away and minimise the crimes committed by their own community and exaggerate and play up the crimes of the other side: one's own side is always on the defensive or acting under grave provocation—the other side is always aggressive, cold-blooded and all its actions premeditated, the result of deep-laid plans for the total annihilation of the other community.

Thus quite unmindful of its provocative consequences, while the Congress press played up Noakhali, called for despatch of British troops there the scrapping of the League Ministry, even aerial bombardment, and while Congressmen mingled their voices with Hindu Sabhaites who wanted "blood for blood" for the crime of Noakhali—it is now the turn of the League press to do the same—completely forgetting all the criticism that it levelled against the Congress press only a short while ago in regard to Noakhali.

How has the League press treated the Bihar events?

First, reckless exaggeration.

What has happened in Bihar is undoubtedly one of the most ghastly massacres in our history—both in regard to the number of innocent persons killed and the brutal and fiendish manner of it. Nevertheless, some of the League papers think it necessary to magnify it still further.

Laying It Thick

Thus, the *Zamindar* (Lahore), in one of its editorials, says that "according to an estimate, the number of Muslims killed in Bihar is one lakh."

No responsible League leader of Bihar has made this estimate; nevertheless this fantastic figure is published, presumably to rouse the Mussalmans against the Congress and Hindus.

Another Bombay Urdu daily, *Iqbal*, features Bihar under the headline: "Danger of total annihilation of Muslims in Bihar".

Second, bravado and threats.

The *Zamindar* takes the lead here also. Thus in a full column banner headline it says: "A handful of Muslims fought twenty to twenty-five thousand Hindus for six hours". (November 10). In the same paper a warning is given to the Congress that if atrocities against the Muslims are not stopped forthwith, then the League would declare war against them.

Other papers, echoing one of Mr Jinnah's recent speeches, exhort the Muslims to become strong and powerful—this is the only argument which Hindus understand. They have been attacked in Bihar because they were weak. Let them remove their weakness.

This is the same age old argument of all chauvinists: if you want peace, prepare for war. Translated in terms of Indian communalism, it mean: If you want communal safety prepare for riots. If you are well prepared, you can defeat the other community, even though you might be less in numbers.

Could one imagine a more diseased, a more jaundiced and more bankrupt attitude of mind?

Third, an attempt to justify the political policy pursued by the League leadership.

The Congress press had campaigned that Noakhali was a sample of Pakistan. The League press now cries loudly that Bihar, UP and Bombay riots are samples of Akhand Hindustan and Hindu Raj. The only safety for Mussalmans lies in separation and Pakistan, and perhaps exchange of populations.

The case for a separate 'Muslim State' is supposed to be conclusively proved. Therefore, those Muslims who have been the unfortunate victims of Hindu communal frenzy, are, according to League papers, martyrs in the cause of Pakistan.

Divinity and Destiny

The *Dawn* puts forward this argument with characteristic frenzy: "They who shed our brothers' blood on this Indian soil are planting with every drop of it the seed of Pakistan, the land where Islam shall prevail.... They are building with the slaughtered bodies of our martyrs the surest foundations for the Islamic State of our dreams. We indulge in no figure of speech. In this Great Human Tragedy, we see the Divine Way of our Destiny's fulfillment".

But even the invoking of Divinity and Destiny cannot hide one glaring fact— that those who talk of a sovereign independent Pakistan are running to British imperialists for protection and for the vindication of their rights.

They complain that not enough white troops have been sent to Bihar, the *Morning News* (Calcutta), demands that the democratically elected Bihar Ministry should be dissolved by the Governor-General.

They abjectly enter the Viceroy's Executive Council they accept the undemocratic Imperialist Plan of India's slavery more willingly than the Congress compromisers.

Ordinary mortals see behind the curtain of Divine dispensation put up by League leaders—reactionary Muslim upper-class interests, supported by imperialism. For the moment they have successfully hidden this nefarious reality from the bulk of Muslims.

Hence we find that an understanding of the root cause of communal tension—the unfolding of the policy of British Imperialism of alliance with reactionary Indian vested interests, in order to divide our common suffering people, and thus to disrupt and defeat their revolutionary struggle for independence and democracy—this understanding is yet absent from the League press.

Together, Together

The destiny of Indian Muslims would be realised when they successfully forge common links with the oppressed Hindu masses for communal peace now—in spite of their own and the Hindu communal leaderships.

It will be realised when Muslim peasants participate in the joint struggle against landlordism for land. It will be realised when Muslim workers jointly fight the capitalists for a better life.

It will be realised when with their Hindu brethren they march forward for the revolutionary overthrow of the deadliest enemy of us all—British Imperialism.

17. Behind the Slogan: 'Transfer of Population'

Article, 'Bihar belongs to Hindus, Muslims both'. *People's Age*, 22 December 1946.

In Bihar the riots are over. But the aftermath of riots is as terrible as the riots themselves.

You will see this aftermath and what it was in any of the refugee camps you may visit. Three to four lakhs of Muslims were affected in the five riot-ridden districts of Patna, Chapra, Monghyr, Bhagalpur and Gaya. Nearly one lakh of them—men, women and children—are refugees, homeless, uprooted from the soil. At least another lakh are panic-stricken and may at any moment join the army of refugees.

The refugees are going through hell—of that there are no two opinions. The food is bad, they have very few clothes, sanitation is almost nil. But more than anything else, the refugees suffer because they see no future ahead of them. Go back to the villages from which they had been hounded? The very thought makes them shudder. Then what?

'Migrate'

It has been in this situation of terror and panic and acute physical and mental suffering that the leaders of the Muslim League—rich and prosperous gentlemen coming from other Provinces—have put across the slogan: Migrate.

Premier Suhrawardy of Bengal opened a refugee camp at Asansol. The League began its propaganda: You are suffering here in Bihar's camps—go to Asansol, where a Muslim Ministry will give you shelter, milk for your children, food and clothes.

The refugees saw a glimmer of hope in their words and began migrating *en masse*.

The next step was obvious.

Suhrawardy in a letter to Mr Jaffar Imam, the Bihar League leader, declared that he could arrange to settle 50,000 Muslims in Panagarh. At the same time, he pledged to do all in his power to settle lakhs of Muslims in Bengal.

The same offer was repeated by Mr Abul Hashem (Bengal League Secretary) and others who came to Bihar.

This appealed to the distressed and terrified Muslim masses and they saw in this proposal the only way to save themselves.

Congress Attitude

What has been the attitude which Congressmen and the Congress Ministry have taken towards this slogan?

There is no doubt that the Ministry made sincere efforts to provide relief for the refugees. But they relied only on the official machinery, and the Congress as an organisation appeared

nowhere in relief work. On the contrary, the Ministry was so scared that the League top leaders bullied it into handing over to them the management of all refugee camps.

As a result, the Congress was not able through relief work to restore the confidence of the Muslim masses.

When Pandit Nehru visited Bihar, he carried out an intensive campaign for peace and unity. Bihar's Congressmen did not follow his lead. No Congress campaign of any sort—not to speak of a Congress-League joint campaign—was launched.

Whatever Congressmen did was done as part of the administrative plan of the Ministry in cooperation with the bureaucracy and this could not in any way help in restoring any sense of security among the Muslims.

Ordinances were passed which aimed at helping to restore the refugees to their homes, and Congressmen felt that the Ministry had done all that anybody could possibly do.

Today they see that despite all the ordinances, refugees are not returning home, but they do not realise that this reluctance to go back arises from the refugees really not being able to see any real security for themselves behind a string of ordinances and laws. Congressmen attribute the failure of their ordinances entirely to the migration propaganda of the League, but make no effort to understand why that propaganda is effective.

Faith in Ordinances

While Congressmen are placing all their faith in ordinances to restore unity, already nearly fifty thousand Muslims have migrated to Bengal.

Of course, the League leaders are delighted at this turn of events. But not one of them has given the slightest thought to the problem of settling so many persons in Bengal. Suhrawardy, of course, extended an invitation and promised help to all who cared to come to Bengal—but that was mere politics.

And today the refugees are lying in camps in Bengal, their condition even worse than what it was in Bihar.

Congressmen turn a blind eye to this migration and console themselves by saying that it is quite normal for the landless and unemployed to migrate to Bengal.

This, of course, is true. But to dismiss today's migration as only the 'normal' migration, is to be blind to the reality that unless we can stop this migration now and quick, there will be a permanent breach in Bihar and civil war will become a permanent part of Bihar.

While Congress and League leaders give the refugees conflicting directions, what are the refugees themselves feeling, what do they want to do—return to their own villages, migrate or what?

The Leaguers vociferously assert that the refugees want to migrate. Congressmen equally categorically assert that the refugees are anxious to get back home, only League propaganda and activity prevent them from doing so.

Inside Refugee Camps

I wanted to get at the truth for myself and so I went to the refugee camps and met them [refugees] myself.

In one refugee camp, I met nearly twenty-five refugees, mostly peasants and agricultural labourers. At the start, when I began discussing their problems with them, they shut up and would not talk and began to look at me with suspicion. Why should I, a non-Muslim, be so sympathetic?

But I was soon able to convince them of my genuine desire to learn their problems and we started discussing their present and their future. They said that they were migrating to Bengal as that alone could save them. I pointed out to them that Bengal is a poor Province and that the Muslim peasants there are starving. Why not go to the Punjab or Sind?

At once came the reply: "Those Provinces are so far away from home." And then they burst out feelingly and described their happy past in their village homes, how they really did not want to leave, but in the present situation nothing else could save them.

'Who Wants to Leave?'

I continued the discussion and asked them if it was not a fact that their Hindu neighbours actually helped them to save their lives and evacuate. They admitted that this was so, and then after thinking for a moment said that they would not hesitate to go back if only they felt sure they would be safe. They concluded by telling me: "Who after all wants to leave his home unless he is compelled to do so?"

Another poignant scene I witnessed while travelling, convinced me that the job of rehabilitating these uprooted peasants can be done.

About four Muslim families were travelling in the Delhi Express bound for Howrah. When I asked them where they were going, I learnt that they were migrating to Bengal. They did not know exactly what they would be made to do, where they would be settled. They were apprehensive of their future.

But even then they were going because a Muslim Ministry is in power there. When the train passed through Fatwa, one old man with tears in his eyes pointed out the road leading to his village where his forefathers had lived and where he had been living in peace and complete amity with his neighbours for the last 55 years. He had his three acres of land and two bullocks. And now he was leaving it all behind.

They Would Come Back

When I intervened and began to talk to them, the old man and a few others burst into tears, saying repeatedly that they would come back the moment the situation permitted.

Another incident will help you to understand better the feelings of the refugees. Three elderly Muslims from Bachhwan in the northern part of the district of Monghyr came to the Communist Party office in a panic and discussed the problem of migration. On the advice of some local League workers and the only rich Muslim in their area, they were ready to migrate.

But after a lot of discussion, we were able to make them see that the slogan of migration is only a slogan of power politics and that it is not in the interest of the Muslim masses. They accepted our advice and decided against migration.

So much for the refugees. They do not want to migrate. They can be persuaded not to do so. But what about them among whom they have to live? Will they receive them back?

The Communist Party, the Kisan Sabha and the trade unions are in the midst of a campaign all over Bihar trying to build unity to tackle the awful spectre of migration. Here are a few glimpses of our work. Our experiences will help to understand both the problems and what we have achieved.

Tarapur area in Monghyr district was swept by the riot. Mass evacuation of Muslims took place. But in one village—Majhgain—forty Muslim families remained behind—safe and contented.

Why did this happen? What was there in Majhgain which was not there in other villages?

The fact is that in Majhgain, under the Communist leadership, the Hindus and Muslims united, kept together, the Hindus guaranteeing the safety of the Muslims.

And today, refugees from villages which are near Majhgain are returning home, on the assurance of the united Hindus and Muslims of Majhgain that they will be safe. The actual, practical example of Majhgain gives them confidence and a sense of security.

Active Intervention

In the thanas of Lakhiserai, Sheikhpura and Barbigaha in Monghyr district, the riot could not break out because of the active intervention of the Kisan Sabha and Congress and Communist workers.

But there were stray stabbings and as the news of the surrounding areas poured in, panic grew fast.

Evacuation and migration began to be discussed. But immediately the Kisan Sabha and the Communist Party began a campaign among the kisans, pointing out who were behind the riots, how for the preservation of their rights and to save themselves from eviction by the landlords, they must remain united.

They campaigned among the Muslims, telling them what migration would mean and urging them to stay on.

At the same time they asked the Hindu kisans to help their Muslim brothers to protect their crops, help them to harvest and thus win their confidence in a real concrete way.

The vast majority of the Muslims stayed back—did not migrate.

Active campaigning, active efforts to win the Muslims' confidence back were also successful in other centres where Communist influence was strong—such as Sonapur thana in Chapra (where a strong OT Railway Union and a strong Kisan Sabha together campaigned, formed village committees and prevented migration).

In Paliganj in Patna district, though there was no riots, forty families migrated to Bengal at the call of the League. But they were left stranded at Asansol and have come back. The welcome they have received from their neighbours and the treatment they received outside their homes have made them firm campaigners against migration.

Workers Stand Firm

In Bihar Sharif, the worst affected area, 4000 *biri* workers—Hindus and Muslims—are working together in the same sheds. Some of the workers did evacuate, but the majority remained behind, thanks to the real intervention of their union.

At the Bata Factory, near Patna, though there are 150 Muslim workers from Noakhali itself, the workers have remained united. The Muslim workers genuinely placed before the union their fear of an attack from the surrounding villages and said that they would be forced to evacuate, unless they felt confident that they would be safe.

To ensure their safety the Communists immediately started an active campaign in the neighbouring villages.

In the Monghyr Tobacco Factory, the union leaders (both Congressmen and Communists) worked to prevent migration and succeeded not only in keeping Hindus and Muslims together at work, but were able to start a united fight against the owners for better living conditions, right during the days of the worst panic.

Even where we had done no previous work, as in Nagarnausa area (in Patna district), Communist squads went out and campaigned and met with so much response that Hindu

kisans came forward and offered to rebuild the homes of the refugee Muslim kisans and restore to them all the looted property they could find, if only they would return home.

What Should be Done

These are all first glimpses of what can be done—even by a small organised body like the Communist Party. Much more can be done by the Congress with its wide influence throughout Bihar provided it realises that ordinances by themselves cannot help.

Real practical help, restoration of confidence by active joint Congress-League campaigns to rebuild the homes of refugees, to help them harvest their crop, arrangement of genuine welcome meetings, the formation of peace committees and joint volunteer brigades—these can prevent migration, can heal the gaping wound in Bihar's body.

These things must be done. Biharis have suffered before, the earthquake, the police atrocities of 1942. But Biharis never fought Biharis.

The hope is there. Bihar is the home of its Hindus and its Muslims. No one wants to leave. Already some Leaguers in Bihar—such as Mr Mahbub Warsi, Gaya League leader—have begun to see the bankruptcy of the migration slogan and to campaign against it. Bihar's Leaguers must cooperate in every effort to restore the refugees to their homes.

It is the task of Bihar's Congress to win back unity, win back the refugees—not by administrative ordinances, but by rousing the great patriotism of the Biharis, which has carried them through holocausts before, and can and must carry them through this one also.

4.iii BOMBAY

1. M.K. Gandhi Deeply Saddened by Communal Riots in Ahmedabad

Extracts from a news report, 'Sacrifice yourself and end the rioting'. *Free Press Journal*, 2 July 1946.

Poona, July 2. Mahatma Gandhi addressing the prayer meeting today referred to the situation in South Africa and Ahmedabad and said that he was deeply pained at the communal riots which had broken out at Ahmedabad. He was particularly unhappy that such communal outbursts should have taken place when they had their own Ministry in the province.

He indicated that permanent peace could never be achieved with the help of police and military. Mr Morarji Desai had gone to Ahmedabad today. He had asked the Home Minister to restore communal peace there by personally visiting the affected areas and persuading members of both communities to give up the present methods.

Gandhiji revealed that he had advised Mr Morarji Desai to sacrifice even his life, if it came to that, for the restoration of communal harmony in Ahmedabad as Mr Ganeshshankar did some years back at Cawnpore. Permanent peace could be achieved only by sacrifice and not by killing others. "all of them like true *satyagrahis* volunteered and laid down their lives for that noble purpose and high objective, he was sure India would achieve its independence in no time. "India has been a *Karma Bhoomi* for long by sacrificing our lives for a noble cause. Let us make it *Swarga Bhoomi*." It, he added, was unfortunate and tragic that Ahmedabad, where he spent his early life and where Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel spent most of his life and which was once free from communal troubles, should now become the centre of communal fury....

2. A Rath Yatra Leads to Riots in Ahmedabad

Report by Deputy Superintendent of Police to District Magistrate, Ahmedabad; Ahmedabad, 13 July 1946. File No. 5/26/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Communal Riots in Ahmedabad

I have the honour [?] to report that communal rioting broke out in Ahmedabad City on 1-7-46 at about 1230 hours. The incident occasioning the outbreak occurred in the *rath yatra* procession in the limits of Sherkotda Police station near Kalupur Outside Chowky.

Who actually struck the first blow is not known, but evidence at present available discloses the following sequence of events. A certain Sikander, who is a locally well-known Muslim gymnast, accompanied by 3 or 4 members of his *akhada* [open-air gymnasium], was watching the exhibition by a Hindu *akhada* which was taking part in the procession. Sikander criticized the style of weight lifting adopted by one Chitrnanjan [alias] Chintamani. This led to a scuffle, in which both Sikander and Chitrnanjan received injuries. Sikander and a *sadhu*, both of whom were very excited, were arrested and locked up. At this moment, soda water bottles were flung from the Daru Tafrid Hotel at the procession. On the orders of the SDPO [?] present, an armed Police party fired 5 rounds at the hotel windows, which stopped the hail of missiles. The hotel doors were forced open by the police and 48 Muslims found inside were arrested. By this time, the crowd forming the procession was greatly excited and considerable difficulty was experienced in preventing it from surging through Kalupur Gate into the Muslim locality inside, where a Muslim crowd was forming. However, a Police cordon was established and the procession successfully moved on along its route over Kalupur overbridge, but not before it had assaulted several Muslims and broken up stalls, etc., in a nearby mango market and one Hindu had been stabbed fatally. The procession was kept moving with difficulty up to Saraspur Chakla. Rowdy elements, particularly youth belonging to *akhadas* kept breaking away to loot Muslim shops and hotels and had to be dispersed by frequent lathi charges, several being arrested red-handed. In one such foray against a hotel, a Muslim was stabbed and killed.

The procession was eventually successfully concentrated in Saraspur Chakla, from where, after much persuasion and many threats it was broken up, the elephants being sent away by one route, the chariots and *sadhus* by another and the *akhada* members being kept pinned in Saraspur and moved home by motor lorries arranged for by their leaders.

Meanwhile, stabbings, assaults and some arson and looting had broken out in the city proper and the Police had to open fire on several occasions to disperse crowds of Hindus and Muslims who were trying to get to grips with each other. A curfew order to take effect from 9 p.m. was promulgated, but enforcement of curfew by warning people to get off the streets and driving them indoors was actually commenced by 7 p.m. Orders under Section 144 CrPC banning assemblies and processions were also promulgated. The curfew remained in force until 6 a.m. on the 2nd July. Soon after curfew ended, stabbing, crowd assaults, looting and arson recommenced, particularly in the Ritchie Road and Relief Road areas. It was, therefore, decided to impose a 24 hour curfew in this area and the order was accordingly promulgated and enforced from 4 p.m., the curfew period throughout the city being at the same time extended from 7 p.m. to 8 a.m.

With the enforcement of a 24 hour curfew, the Ritchie Road and Relief Road area was well in hand, but assaults in sporadic form occurred in that [those] localities....

... Mob violence ceased to be a problem during the afternoon of the 2nd July and the tension has thereafter been kept alive by stray stabbing assaults, usually committed by 3 or 4 persons pouncing out of a narrow lane onto some unfortunate passerby of the opposite community.

3. Ahmedabad Under Curfew

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Bombay Province for the first half of July 1946. File No. 18/7/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Communal

Serious riots broke out in Ahmedabad on July 1st following a dispute between Hindu and Muslim gymnasts during the *Rathayatra* procession. The dispute led to the throwing of brickbats and soda water bottles at the processionists from a neighbouring Muslim hotel. Reports of the incident spread throughout the city and a number of cases of stabbing, arson, and looting were reported during the afternoon. Troops were called out and a curfew was imposed. Orders under Section 42 of the District Police Act and Section 144 of the Criminal Procedure Code imposing a ban on the carrying of weapons and prohibiting meetings and processions, respectively, were also issued. On the following day, as the situation deteriorated further, the Home Minister flew to Ahmedabad and immediately on his arrival proceeded to form a Peace Committee consisting of Hindu and Muslim leaders. A twenty-four hour curfew was also enforced in the most affected areas. As a result of these measures, the situation appeared to return to normal, but the ill-feelings between the members of the two communities being deep-rooted there was recrudescence of trouble on the forenoon of July 5th, after the curfew was relaxed for four hours. Several incidents of stabbing occurred and an attempt was made to set fire to a Hindu temple. Another Hindu temple was looted and property worth thousands of rupees was removed and damaged. Curfew was therefore extended for several days over a great [er] part of the city with only short breaks for the obtaining of essential supplies. In order to disperse crowds, the police and the military had to open fire on several occasions. There was an exodus of labourers and about 5000 of them left the city. By the 8th July the situation had considerably improved and mills and shops were working almost normally. Desultory stabbings, however, continued to take place and the situation continues to cause anxiety. The latest figures of casualties are 53 dead (including two killed in police firing and one by military) and 315 injured (including 12 by police firing). The situation is now generally quiet, except for stray incidents, but tension still continues. The troops were gradually withdrawn from July 7th but kept standing by within the city area and on July 10th they were finally withdrawn, except a few who are patrolling the city occasionally. A full report of the origin and history of the riots has not yet been received from the District Magistrate but it is clear that the disturbances had a political background and were the outcome of the intense communal feelings that have been fostered by political propagandists during the last few months. The riots have had the effect of intensifying these feelings; there has been much mutual recrimination between the major communities and both parties alike have accused the authorities of partiality in their handling of the disturbances.

Communal incidents on a smaller scale occurred in Godhra Town (Panch Mahal) on July 8th, when four Hindus were stabbed and some others were beaten with sticks by Muslims. In all 13 persons were injured. Three of the persons stabbed are in a serious condition. The

rioters also caused damage to a dispensary and looted a cloth shop and attacked two other shops in the vicinity. The usual prohibitory orders have been issued under Section 144 Criminal Procedure Code, and Section 42 of the District Police Act. The situation is now normal, but feelings are reported to be strained. It has not yet been possible to find out the exact cause of the riot, but it is suspected that it was a repercussion of the Ahmedabad riots due to exaggerated accounts given by rumours or due to an attempt on the part of some bad characters to create trouble.

Some minor clashes occurred between Hindu and Muslim boys at Sangamner (Ahmedabad District) on June 22nd and 23rd, over a petty quarrel between a Muslim boy and a volunteer of the Rashtriya Swayam Sewak Sangh, resulting in slight injuries to eight Muslim and four Hindu boys.

4. Ahmedabad Riots Caused by Dissemination of Hate Politics

Extracts from a news report, 'The Ahmedabad riots'. *People's Age*, 21 July 1946.

The Ahmedabad riots—one of the most serious our country has passed through under British rule—cannot be dismissed as the result merely of some local cause or the outcome of the work of a few local fanatics or *mawalis*.

They reveal something new—the deep fanatical mass hatred of one another that is being spread among the common folk, both Hindu and Muslim today.

They are a striking contrast with the country-wide surging demonstrations of Hindu-Muslim unity only a few months ago around the INA and RIN, the glorious Hindu-Muslim unity that the Railway and Postal workers are demonstrating today all over India.

These riots are the direct outcome of the three months' devil's work of the imperialist Cabinet Mission and the compromising disruptive policy of the League and the Congress leaderships towards the country's freedom struggle.

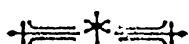
The total casualties for two weeks have exceeded 60 dead and about 400 wounded. Over 2450 arrests have been made so far by the authorities. Two well-known young Congress workers—Vasant Rao Hegishte and Rajaballi Lakhani—have fallen martyrs.

For two weeks, the entire life of the city—mills, markets, shops, schools, colleges—has been dislocated. Arson, looting and stabbings are still continuing. Nearly 10,000 workers and thousands of students have left the city.

Bitter and fanatical hatred of each other—what the leaders have been preaching the last three months—has become a mass phenomenon among the Hindu and Muslim middle-class. In Hindu areas, most of the Muslim shops have been looted and destroyed and vice versa. Temples and mosques have been burnt and demolished.

Among the middle-class it is no longer the Congress versus the League, but Hindu versus Muslim.

The general feeling among the middle-classes of both communities today is not that this common shame must be ended—and ended quickly. On the contrary. "Such riots have come to stay in Ahmedabad as they have in Dacca,"—this is what, one hears the public saying.



5. Emergency Declared in Bombay

Extracts from a news report, '47 killed in Bombay riots'. *Hindustan Times*, 2 September 1946.

Bombay, September 1. Forty-seven persons have died and over 170 persons injured in three hour communal rioting in Bombay this evening.

The authorities who have been anticipating a breach of the peace took prompt action and localized the trouble to an area of about two square miles bounded by Pydhoni and Mohammed Ali Road on the one side and JJ Hospital and Golpitha and Bendi Bazar on the other.

The police opened fire on three occasions to disperse the riotous mobs. One temple was attacked. Almost all the deaths occurred instantaneously as the result of stabbing.

Following the outbreak of the disturbances the Government of Bombay declared "a state of emergency" in order to enable the Commissioner of Police to deport out of the city without trial persons suspected to be bad characters.

An order under Section 144, Criminal Procedure Code was immediately promulgated banning the assembly of five or more persons in the disturbed areas. An aeroplane was reconnoitering the affected areas. A curfew between 7 p.m. and 6.30 a.m. has also been imposed.

The situation quietened after the imposition of the curfew. However, troops are standing by. Police and mobile wireless units were moving about the disturbed areas keeping in continuous touch with police headquarters....

The trouble originated in a mixed locality at Golpitha where following the hoisting of black flags by Muslims, Hindu residents hoisted Congress flags on opposite buildings and this was the signal for stone throwing and assault....

6. Muslims Remonstrate in Bombay at Formation of Interim Government

Article, 'Communal riot bursts out in Bombay'. *People's Age*, 8 September 1946.

Riots broke out in Bombay on Sunday, September 1, at 4 p.m. A quiet Direct Action Day and a peaceful Id, had led people to believe that immediate trouble had been averted, though rabid elements on both sides were busy for several days making preparations and flinging challenges for a showdown.

It came when in response to the League leader Liaquat Ali's statement Muslims in Golpitha, a mixed locality, hoisted black flags in the afternoon of September 1, and exhibited shoes and brooms, to show their 'contempt' for the new Interim Government. Big tricolors came out triumphantly, defiantly and before long the followers of both had come to a clash.

Who struck the first blow was a question that lost all meaning in a situation where each crowd was wanting to vent its wrath on the other.

News spread like wildfire, and frenzied crowds of Hindus and Muslims, each in their area, set upon stray unsuspecting passersby of the other community and brutally beat or stabbed them to death.

In both cases, the acts were done in full sight of the people residing in the neighborhood, who stood in the balconies and looked on without disapproval or disgust. At street corners there were gangs full of lust for blood.

Police came on the scene without much delay but within the first two hours the death roll was above 30 and the number of injured over 150.

Joshi's Statement

P.C. Joshi was the first to issue a statement reminding the people of the glorious traditions of the united struggle of the RIN mutiny, that freedom had yet to be won and that by such mutual killing only the common enemy benefitted and the common people suffered and died for no purpose.

Most of the nationalist papers did not publish the statement. Some who did cut off the vital portions.

Immediate steps were taken by the Party to set squads in motion and prevent the riot fever from spreading to the working-class areas.

Through a common friend, our Party tried to get S.K. Patil, President of the BPCC, and Chundrigar, President of the Provincial League, to bring out jointly a van, with both Congress and League flags, calling on the people to check this rioting. But our efforts proved fruitless.

League and Congress volunteers functioned in their areas, but confined themselves to escorting marooned Muslim and Hindus to safe areas.

Curfew was imposed from 7 p.m. to 6.30 a.m., but it was already clear that the riots had broken out in a big way and that police and military action could at best prevent only mass murders as in Calcutta.

The Second Day

The second day, after withdrawal of curfew, tension mounted higher.

In the working-class areas, however, things were normal and mills worked as usual, only the trams were running at long intervals of two or three hours.

The mills in the Madanpura area, Mulmul, Hindustan, Bradbury, Khatau and Simplex were closed.

In the morning the *Free Press* published a report that Morarji Desai had directed the police to take 'stern steps'.

It was the day of assumption of [office by?] the Interim Government, and in border areas [between Hindu and Muslim neighbourhoods], a battle of flags and slogans had begun, accompanied by stone throwing.

On the Hindu side the main slogan was 'Rashtriya Sarkar Amar Ho', (Long Live the National Government), on the Muslim side it was 'Fateh Pakistan, Bate Hindustan' (To Pakistan Victory! To Hindustan—Division).

Stray lootings of Hindu and Muslim shops, clashes between rival mobs and even firing took place. The tempo of attacks had been maintained and by 4 p.m. the total number of injured was reported to be over 300.

P.C. Joshi issued an appeal to all Party members and sympathisers to immediately come forward to donate their blood for transfusion because the hospitals were running short of their blood reserves.

48-Hour Curfew

By evening the Government decided to impose a 48-hour curfew. The areas thus put under the most rigorous conditions were mainly Muslim and just a few patches of mixed border areas. Military was posted everywhere, and armed police enforced the curfew.

These iron conditions, the show of police and military might, and the keen resentment that Hindu areas were free from such humiliating conditions, were in the main responsible for the trouble spreading to other areas, and for the first time to the working-class areas.

Firing was resorted to twice in the night which embittered Muslims all the more.

The Third Day

The third day did not bring in any easing of the tension. No joint efforts were made by the Congress and the League to check the riot situation. The League leaders kept mum. The Congress leaders believed that the riots would continue for some time but would ultimately quieten down under stronger police and military measures.

But far from quietening, the situation worsened. Throughout the day, the Muslims, who were now led to believe that all these measures were 'Hindu Congress oppression' over Muslims, tried repeatedly to break the curfew ring and carry the war into Hindu areas. The Hindus were seen as the main enemy and the police and military as forces that hindered them from getting at the enemy.

Pitched Battles

Pitched battles between Hindus and Muslims, mainly with soda water bottles, stones and brickbats, were fought at Jumma Masjid, Umerkhadi and Kalachowki. The police was also attacked at Pinjara Lane and Zakariah Masjid.

At Zakariah Masjid, a big crowd of Muslims attempted to break the military cordon and rush into the Hindu area of Mandvi. The police van was stoned heavily and there was military firing.

An idea of the way things were developing could be had from the fact that firing was resorted to in more than 15 places and 103 rounds are admitted to have been fired. The police headquarters radioed all heads of police stations to take 'stringent measures'.

At 9 in the night, ¹ and other pressmen went in a bus arranged by the Director of Information with a police guard, with rifles outpointed menacingly. We could only see evidence of past battles. At Umerkhadi, 80 persons were rounded up and sat huddled there but the Officer-in-Charge, Deputy Commissioner Lyons, would not allow us even to have a word with the men.

Fireballs

At Kalachowki, we were able to see a stone battle in progress. From the Hindu houses, a shower of stones would come, replied by the Muslims, who are in a very small minority here. A new feature in the riots is the throwing of fireballs, a bundle of cloth dipped in oil, set on fire and thrown on rooftops of rival houses. I saw one such thrown by Hindus on Muslim houses at Kalachowki and another thrown by Muslims at Golpitha.

That police measures and the 24-hour curfew had not solved the problem was clear from the day's casualties. There were more killed and less injured on the third day than on the first, though the firing by the police and military accounted for quite a few deaths.

By the third day, the riot was spreading. Ghodapdeo, Victoria Gardens, saw pitched battles, and at Parel there was a stabbing case.

At the time of writing, the fourth day has dawned, after a disturbed night. In the night there were frequent shouts of *Allah-Ho-Akbar* and screams from Hindu houses nearby. It was a war of nerves. There were also sounds of gunfire heard.

Reactions

The reaction of the people generally is that such things are not desirable but are inevitable.

There has been a case reported of Muslims using an ambulance for carrying missiles of warfare, knives and stones. There have been two cases of Congress volunteers who had stored up stones and brickbats in their homes in Mandvi area.

But the general popular reaction is that of a Bohri trader who had to get off the bus at Bori Bunder and walk to Crawford Market. He said in evident disgust and fright, "What fine leaders we have! They have made all life impossible. An honest man can't walk on the streets in peace."

Blood Donations

The squad of 13 which went from our Party headquarters to the JJ Hospital to donate their blood on Tuesday was the first batch to respond to P.C. Joshi's call.

After that 12 girls of the Bombay Students' Union (affiliated to the AISF) went this morning, and the quiet brave way in which they gave their blood won loud praises from the JJ Hospital authorities. The second batch from the Party headquarters went today.

As we gave our blood and were waiting for the ambulance to take us back, another batch arrived from the FSU [?].

Despite repeated appeals by the Congress House and frequent visits of the van there, the doctors complained no donors had come. The League also had promised to send donors but none came.

The Congress House has called on the people to organise themselves for self-defence, because the police might not be promptly available for protection. There is, however, no appeal to stop all individual killing.

Mr Jinnah is reported to have told a foreign correspondent that Calcutta and Bombay are the 'consequences' of the bypassing of the League in the formation of the Interim Government. Congress leaders say that only 'stern' measures will put it down. Meanwhile, the common people suffer, the common enemy has a free hand, and the situation worsens.

7. Anti-riot Efforts in Bombay

Article, 'Red flag fights against fratricidal war'. *People's Age*, 15 September 1946.

Eight days in Bombay, September 1 to 8. But these eight days have shown up two Bombays. The one is ghastly, fiendish with its Hindu and Muslim goondas, their knives and lathis, dripping with blood. The other, unrecorded in the press, is human, heroic with its Hindu and Muslim people, taking out unity processions, defending at the highest risk one another's hearths and homes.

For two days the goondas tried their worst to rope in the working-class. In Lalbaug and Kala Chowki, Hindu and Muslim workers were stabbed on their way to the mills and factories. Some local merchants even incited the goondas to loot their neighbours shops.

Ceaselessly the Party of the working-class, the Communist Party, fought against the menace even before it actually began. Sensing its rumblings, the Party organisers were already in the streets, in the *chawls*. In their handbills and their meetings, through their lorry fitted with loudspeaker (till it was gagged by the police orders against meetings) they battled to ward it off.

Unity Procession

Kurla, on the outskirts of Bombay, has a mixed population. It too had put up festoons of black flags, at one place even shoes. Rumours were thickest that Kurla would be the first battleground.

But Kurla had its patriotic traditions too. Its Congress and League leaders got together. A Red-flagger took the lead. A unity procession was taken out. The flames from Bombay were warded off.

On the 6th 500 Hindu and Muslim workers, again with a Red-flagger in the lead, took out a procession through the area. For the second time the danger was warded off.

But the biggest task faced this Red-flagger in his factory. On the 7th some interested parties spread the rumour about serious rioting in its neighborhood. The workers coming from various communities got ready to quit. Allowing this to happen would have certainly lighted the flame. He sensed the danger. With his colleagues he went to the workers and thundered: "Only cowards will go out. We are workers. We have lived and fought here together. Today also we are going to work here together."

The workers at once responded. They saw through the game. Rumours were scotched, danger averted.

Mahadeo Wadi in Sewree is a base of the Red flag. The goondas picked up on this as the field of operations. Just in the vicinity was a mosque and also a Muslim cemetery.

The road to the cemetery was soon decorated with Tricolours. Rumours were assiduously spread about how goondas were massing in hundreds to storm a Hindu temple nearby. Goondas from the neighborhood were mobilised 'for defence'. Appeals were sent to Mahadeo Wadi for 'help in defence of our temple'.

But the workers of the Wadi saw through it. They not only refused to go. They even formed their Peace Committee and fought back goonda infiltration. Meanwhile the latter mobilised a big force and marched for 'defence'. The idea was to incite the common people into attacking the Muslim Pathans in the vicinity.

The plan miscarried but the police showed their efficiency by arresting workers just from the Wadi which had resisted this provocation. They even arrested men while taking their meals.

Next day the goondas tried again to rope these workers in. They expected that the provocative arrests by the police would do their job. But Mahadeo Wadi is a base of the Red flag. The workers smashed this attempt too.

While on one side in Lalbaug goondas were stabbing people, setting houses of fire, etc., at the other end in Ambewah, a base of the Red flag, Hindu and Muslim workers were helping each other to maintain their old relations. They lived close to a number of notorious gangs of 'patriotic' goondas, who at one time even succeeded in preventing the Muslims from drawing their rations.

Rumours of course played their part. And yet these workers kept their heads. They gathered together the ration cards of their Muslim brothers and got them their food. The goondas' only hope (attack was out of question) of starving the Muslims to death was foiled.

Muslim Boy Saved

One of the noblest acts of common man's heroism also took place in Lalbaug along with one of the most fiendish. A large gang of goondas came to know that a family of eight or nine Muslims was sheltering in a mosque nearby. To the shame of the city, these cowards attacked the mosque and stabbed and stoned to death these innocent men, women and even children.

The whole family was wiped out except for a boy of seven or eight. A neighbouring *bhaiyya* [Bihari] worker remained true to the finest traditions of our common nationalism. He managed to hide away the boy in time in his little hut, under his cot. He knew he faced certain death if it was known. And yet he faced it. The boy was saved.

Madanpura is Bombay's Muslim working-class area where the worker follows his class flag. Here is situated the Dagad Chawl occupied by Untouchable workers. They form an island in here and yet they are safe. The goonda carnage in Lalbaug area had for a time stunned these simple Muslims. But Communist Party workers were not slow to expose the goonda game in Lalbaug trying to spread the riot in the working-class areas. The workers saw it. The Dagad Chawl was protected by its Muslim neighbours.

Hindu Workers Protected

In one of the areas in the heart of Bombay, an area which is the home of Muslim goondas and the storm centre of every riot, the Muslim goondas have had their field day and no Hindu was safe.

Yet here, a simple Muslim worker saved his Hindu fellow workers, living in a *chawl*. A railway worker himself, he had learnt the lesson of common struggle. He gathered together his colleagues and explained to them. Soon a guard, a Muslim guard, was posted over the Hindu area. More. They gave added protection to their Hindu neighbours by offering the services of their children to get them their rations. It was a glorious example of men who are holding the banner of unity high fighting to keep their city's traditions unsoiled.

To quote another inspiring account of fraternal cooperation again from the railways. In the Grant Road Chawl of the BBCE Railway live about 200 Muslims and 400 Hindus. Despite all efforts of the neighbouring goondas their ranks could not be broken throughout the worst days.

Railwayman's Heroism

A goonda dagger stabbed a young Muslim. He was taken to hospital but he died. The job was now how to get the body for funeral rites. For the hospital lay in the heart of a Hindu area and certainly no Hindu would be given the body. Muslims dared not go; Hindus going was of no use. It was a cruel dilemma.

But a stalwart veteran of the BBCE Railwaymen's Union solved it. Himself a giant, he took some of the Muslim relatives of the deceased along to the hospital. It was running the greatest danger not only to himself but to his colleagues. But he ran it. They got the body.

Now another problem faced him. Taking the body through a Hindu area to the Muslim cemetery. The very idea would have sent a chill through anybody's spine these days. But he was a hero of the Red flag. He braved the going again and successfully too.

Under the new inspiration all the tenants now got together and formed a Peace Committee with an equal number of members from each community. They guarded the *chawls*, guarded the grain shop. And the guard belonged to both the communities.

Goondas Beaten Back

The goondas were, however, ignorant of it all. So next day they planned another attack, this time on the grain shop. But the first of them who neared the shop got such a beating that he sank to the ground. His associates beat a hasty retreat. A fighting fraternity showed how to beat back a common menace!

Instances like these could be multiplied. As the manifesto of the Bombay Committee of the Party put it: "If only the Congress and the League leadership had along with the Communist Party tried sincerely and wholeheartedly for unity, Bombay could have been saved the horror of mass murder, firing, loot and arson."

But that was not to be! As a press reporter said to me, "It is our common shame to be defended by the British Army!"

It is against such odds, against the worst communal poisoning so far, that the Party and the Unions of the Red flag are now fighting to defend their common working man's heritage.

8. Workers Keep Aloof from Riots

Extracts from a resolution passed by the Working Council, Bombay Provincial Trade Union Congress; 21 September 1946. File No. 72; All India Trade Union Congress Papers (1946); Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

Resolution

This meeting of the Working Council of the BPTUC records its deepest concern at the recurrence of serious communal riots in Bombay following in the ruinous wake of the recent unprecedented communal clashes in Calcutta....

This meeting heartily congratulates the workers of Bombay who emulating the glorious example of their Calcutta brethren and despite the most vicious type of provocation, kept themselves aloof from the riots and at many places actually protected their brother-workers belonging to other community....

The Council therefore urges upon the workers to defeat all attempts at provocation, unite more firmly under the banner of the Trade Union movement, and smash the designs and the attempt of their enemies to lead them to a fratricidal war.

9. Deeds of Heroism and Unity in the Carnage of Riots

Article, 'Deeds of heroism and brotherly unity'. *People's Age*, 22 September 1946.

The Bombay riot, starting precisely to plan at the same hour in both Hindu and Muslim localities, claiming both Hindus and Muslims, men and women, old men and kids as its victims, is far from over.

Every hour the orgy of murder, stabbing, arson and loot grew.

Desperate efforts were made to carry the flames to the working-class.

On September 1 at one *chawl* in Parel, a car deposited lots of mysterious looking black bottles. (Two days later just in front of this house murders were committed).

Throughout the next night there was a rain of stones and brickbats on Hindu and Muslim *chawls* in Kala Chowki. At Sewree hundreds were gathered to 'defend' a Hindu temple. Stabbing cases took place near Kala Chowki and Lal Baug. Balls of fire were thrown at each other's *chawls* at night.

Goondas under a notorious strike breaker at Lal Baug looted Muslim shops. A lorry with goondas, brandishing daggers and shouting fanatical slogans, rushed through the working-class areas. All this was done in broad daylight.

The police played their part in provocation by wantonly arresting workers *en masse* while leaving the goondas free.

Trapped Hindus Saved

And yet except near the usual goonda resorts in these areas, the working-class as a class kept away from the riots. The heroism of the common man helped to fight back this menace.

The day the riots started, when murder stalked the streets, two Hindus found themselves trapped in the heart of a Muslim area near Null Bazaar.

But suddenly two burly Muslim workers rushed to them. Taking these Hindus under their protection, they brought them to a neighbouring Hindu locality.

But how to go back? And then the Hindu citizens were roused. Some of them accompanied their Muslim brothers back to the 'Border Land', safe over the Frontiers'. A fraternal debt was paid.

At Dadar, a middle-class locality, a Pathan was seen bleeding. At once his colleagues from the *pedhi* sprang to their feet. It would have been a first-rate battle had not Ram Thankar, a Communist, who lived nearby, promptly intervened.

Facing the Pathans, he appealed to them to go back, and not add to the blood already spilt. So forceful was the appeal that even the wounded Pathan saw the point. He too prevailed upon his colleagues not to come out. He was soon rushed to hospital, a disaster was averted.

Peace Committee

Zakeria Bunder, in working-class locality, has a mixed population. When the news of the riots reached these men, they got together to form a Peace Committee. Shetty a Red flag leader in the Firestone Company, actively helped.

Twice the neighbouring goondas tried to attack the people here, but Hindu and Muslim volunteers foiled their game.

But the police who were so far not on the scene, now intervened. On the person of one of the men here, they found a penknife. At once they pounced upon him, arrested him and violently beat him up.

When a responsible member of the Peace Committee intervened on his behalf, he too was beaten up at the Police Station.

At Lal Baug, shop-looting was the craze for two days. A mob was out to loot every Muslim shop. Their slogan was "No Muslim Shall Live Here". No passerby dared intervene.

But five workers of the Red flag refused to play the coward; as the goondas came along they warned them. And the way they did it, the goondas had to take them seriously. The shop stands safe to this day.

A similar story comes from Bhendi Bazaar. Like their Hindu brothers in arms elsewhere, the Muslim goondas too here started a free looting of shops. But here too were Red flaggers.

No Looting Here

Two Pathan drivers made it a point to resist their coreligionists every time they saw them attempting this dirty work and saved a number of Hindu shops.

Royal Navy drivers have only recently come under the Red flag. But in this worst trying period, they showed that they had well assimilated its teachings.

Two of these Pathan drivers saw two of their Hindu colleagues being assaulted by 15 Muslim goondas. Resisting or even dissuading them was to invite the murderer's dagger on themselves.

And yet the two Pathans did the impossible. Throwing back the goondas they rescued their colleagues, took them to their own rooms and later to a place of safety.

Not a Lone Battle

And the working-class was not fighting a lone battle. At places here and there Bombay's common citizen too stood up to blunt the edge of provocation and save his neighbour and himself.

Kennedy Bridge in Girgaon is a mixed area. In reply to the Muslims putting up Black flags there, the Hindus too had hoisted the Tricolour. Stones were thrown, people even started evacuation. The stage seemed set for worse things to come.

But that night representatives from both the communities got together. Both agreed to keep the peace and not to hurt each other's feelings. Both removed their flags. The tension was eased.

While all the known *dadas* [local toughs] and their gangs in working-class areas have been roaming the streets scot-free throughout this fortnight, the police have not hesitated to arrest M.S. Kulkarni, a member of the Communist Party under the Defence of India Rules, on a charge of spreading rumours and inciting the people.

The police case is that he advised the workers of the Government Transport Service [GTS] to request their bosses to give them protection, while on duty.

Goondas Suffer Defeat

It is worth noting that Kulkarni was victimised from Government service because he had sympathised with the GTS strikers some weeks ago. Moreover, in the particular case, the GTS authorities had just promised such protection to their drivers!

It is against such provocation by the police and by the well organised goonda gangs that the workers of Bombay have refused to be drawn into this fratricidal war. And despite the loot and murders that have been staged here the goondas have had to admit a major defeat at the hands of Bombay's Red flag workers.

10. Police Open Fire on Nizampur, Kolaba, Rioters

Extracts from a telegram by Governor's Secretary, Bombay, to the Governor General's Secretary, Government of India; 26 October 1946. File No. 5/49/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Report received of riot in Nizampur (Kolaba District). On 23rd fracas resulted in 2 Hindus stabbed and 11 Hindus and 7 Mohammedans being injured by stones. *Mamlatdar* and Sub-Inspector of Police arriving that evening restored peace. Next day 3000 Hindus from surrounding villages arrived with lathis and arrows and set fire to Muslim houses. When Police tried to prevent arson mob turned on them, causing death of one constable, serious injury to another, and injuries to *Mamlatdar*, Sub-Inspector and Inspector. Police opened fire twice killing four Hindu rioters. Mob dispersed....

2. Communal trouble also reported at Sangamner (Ahmednagar District). After minor outbreak on 21st which was suppressed after 1 Hindu was stabbed, Hindu mob on 23rd succeeded in desecrating Mosque, burning four Muslim houses and looting two Muslim shops. 2 Muslims stabbed on that day and one on 24th out of whom one has died....

3. There has been sharp rise in incidents in Bombay from 19th.... Increased tension due to reports of Noakhali appear to be main cause and I hope for improvement as news of Delhi settlement spreads. Efforts are being made to secure united appeal for peace.

11. Boycott of Muslims of Nizampur

Extracts from a report by T.T. Kothawala, District Magistrate, Kolaba, to the Secretary to the Government, Home Department, Bombay; Camp Mangaon, 26 October 1946. File No. 5/49/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Communal Riot at Nizampur, Taluka Mangaon

... On 26th October 1946 a meeting had been held at Kadape about 3 miles from Nizampur wherein it had been resolved by the Hindus that there should be a complete boycott of Mussalmans. This meeting was called at the instance of Mr Mahadeo Samel a *kasar* of Nizampur and it was resolved by all the villagers in the area to boycott Mussalmans both socially and economically. The only place in this area where Mussalmans live, is Nizampur which has a population of 2300 consisting of 1600 Hindus and 700 Mussalmans. So, though the resolution was for surrounding villages it pointed against Nizampur Muslims but it is doubtful if it was implemented by the Nizampur Hindus.

Rs 100 have been distributed to Muslims rendered destitute owing to the destruction of their houses including food and clothing by way of immediate relief from the discretionary grant.

The total damage caused owing to destruction of houses and cattle sheds and eight paddy stacks is estimated roughly to be about Rs 60,000.

12. Student Squads for Communal Peace

Extracts from a letter by Dinkar Sakrikar, General Secretary, All India Students' Congress, to Mridula Sarabhai; Bombay, 17 November 1946. File No. 22; All India Trade Union Congress Papers (1946); Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

*Bombay,
17 November 1946.*

Dear Smt. Mridulaben,

... There are two matters on which we seek your views:

1. Since we heard Panditji's call to Bihar students we are all very agitated over it and are also anxious to do something concretely to carry out that message. While I have already written to our Bihar branch to send our workers to the distressed villages, I have been thinking over an idea which has struck me. I wish to know whether you like it and whether we should try to work it out. The idea is like this—We should constitute an inter-provincial (and of course inter-communal) 'Students Goodwill Mission' composed of selected students who are good agitators and are also ready to take all risks. This Mission should visit all affected areas in all provinces and preach communal harmony. They should be equipped with literature:

- 1) Copies of statement issued jointly by members of the Interim Government;
- 2) Jawaharlalji's appeal to Bihar people;
- 3) Jay Prakash's appeal;
- 4) Extracts from Jinnah's statements;
- 5) Gandhiji's speeches in Calcutta and East Bengal.

These they should distribute and read out over loudspeakers. We can also enlist the services of some of our Arts students and ask them to prepare posters on communal unity which can be

printed. I think such an intensive drive on non-party lines is absolutely necessary if the frayed feelings are to be calmed. We used to send student squads in villages for election propaganda and they did excellent work. Why should we not now do this work? Jawaharlalji's speeches must have produced a good deal of improvement but then whatever peaceful atmosphere he has created will have to be stabilised. Unless there is continuous hammering of this line, other agitators are likely to undo whatever good is done. I feel that, if the necessary facilities are given, such a Mission will be able to do a lot of good work.

This is an urgent matter and although you must be awfully busy with ever so many things, I would like you to find out for us, if the Government or the Congress would help us in working it out. On one part, we can only place ourselves at the disposal of the Congress and now of the Interim Government in our desire to serve the people.

2. The second is about the Travancore situation. What is our attitude towards the 'uprising' and what are the facts of the situation? We have received no reports of our own and students are asking us whether we support the struggle or not. Can you give us some more information ...?

Yours affectionately,
Dinkar Salunkar

13. Buckshot Used During Taboot Procession in Dabhel, Ratnagiri

Extracts from a report by V.B. Deshpande, Subdivisional Magistrate, Camp Dabhel, to District Magistrate, Ratnagiri; Camp Dabhel, 6 December 1946. File No. 5/49/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Communal Riot at Dabhel on 5-12-46

... The trouble arose last evening during the Moharrum procession at about 5 p.m. *Taboots* from both the mohallas had come from the opposite directions and were passing through the Hindu locality. The Hindus were seeing the procession from their houses as well as in the street. A stone is alleged to have been thrown in the midst. It struck a Muslim boy. The Police Sub-Inspector Dapoli who was on the spot was pacifying the people. The Muslims immediately rushed into the houses by the roadside by breaking them open and damaging property and beating the inmates.... The crowd while retracting to the mohallas destroyed Ganpati and Vithoba temples, broke the idol of Ganpati and caused much damage to the articles of the temple. The Hindus retaliated. They collected on the hill, just behind the Mohammadan mohalla, collected hay and began to throw burning bundles of hay on the houses. The Police Sub-Inspector again opened fire, which had the desired effect of dispersing the mob. The procession of the other *taboot*, which had rushed in other direction went on causing damage and breaking open houses and shops and beating women and children. Some private persons used their guns, discharging buckshot cartridges. Several empties were found in the street which the Police have attached. A Muslim died of buckshot wounds, on the spot. Several others have received buckshot wounds. In all 65 persons have been injured. About 12 from gunshot wounds and 53 from either stick blows or stones by private persons. The Police fired in all 62 rounds. Enquiries made so far reveal not a single person was injured as a result of Police firing....

The peculiar feature of this disturbance is that private persons have used their guns freely. The Sub-Divisional Magistrate has issued an order under Section 144 Criminal Procedure Code requiring all the licensees to deposit their arms in the Police Stations.

We suggest that a similar order may be issued by you for the whole District....

4.IV UNITED PROVINCES

1. Communal Riots During Assembly Polls in Kanpur

Extracts from a news report, 'Police fire twice on Cawnpore mobs'. *Statesman*, 13 March 1946.

Cawnpore, March 12. Four persons are reported to have been killed and over 100 injured when the police fired twice on an unruly mob in the Premnagar area this afternoon. Five rounds were fired each time.

Troops were called out and were detailed for patrol duty in the affected areas. Section 144 has been promulgated, prohibiting the assembly of more than five persons, and curfew has been imposed from 7 p.m. to 5 a.m. The situation was stated to be under control at midnight. A number of arrests were made by the police, including a dozen for breaches of curfew order.

Communal tension was gradually on the increase since the morning when polling for the two seats to the UP Assembly from the Cawnpore City General (Urban) constituency began, and within a few hours, small-scale rioting occurred in several places in Cawnpore. Bricks and lathis were used in some localities. Cases of stabbing and arson are also reported.

A shop adjoining the Sikh Gurdwara in Premnagar was burnt, causing damage to the Gurdwara property, and a small wayside mosque in the Sisamau Nala area is also reported to have been set on fire.

2. Deterioration of Communal Relations in the United Provinces

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for the United Provinces for the second half of March 1946. File No. 18/3/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Communal

Communal relations have unfortunately deteriorated. Tension which for many months has been reported but had not resulted in many actual clashes led to a number of clashes in the first half of the month and on March 29 and 31 to serious riots in Aligarh and Kasganj. A minor riot occurred at Holi in the Bijnor district and on March 4 a communal riot on polling day resulted in the beating of a shopkeeper and the looting of his shop.

Student indiscipline was the origin of the most serious riot of recent times at Aligarh on March 29. Two students had a quarrel with a shopkeeper who is alleged to have been beaten and to have retaliated by firing a shotgun but without injuring anyone. This led to a rumour that a student had been killed and some 200 excited students soon gathered and began damaging shops in the locality. While efforts to check them were underway brick throwing broke out in a nearby lane and later in the day arson and brick throwing spread to a market with thatched roofs. A number of stray assaults occurred the following day. In the result, many shops and much grain were destroyed, four persons and some cattle were burnt to death or died as a

result of burns and sixteen others were admitted to hospital with injuries. On the last day of the month fifteen persons were injured and one killed in a communal riot at Kasganj.

3. Hindus and Muslims Arming Themselves in Agra

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for the United Provinces for the first half of April 1946. File No. 18/4/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Communal

The Aligarh riot which occurred on March 29 has had repercussions in several districts. Two days later, a dispute between RSS Sangh volunteers and Muslim Leaguers resulted in a riot at Kasganj in the Etah district, in the course of which two persons were killed and five shops burnt. Twenty three arrests have been made. A riot between Muslim Leaguers on the one hand and Hindus and nationalist Muslims on the other took place at Ambhta in the Saharanpur district on April 2, when one person was killed and 64 were injured and three shops were looted. At Bahjoi in the Moradabad district two persons were killed and 10 were injured, while some houses and wood stalls were burnt in consequence of a quarrel arising out of the Ram Naumi procession on April 10. Long-standing tension between the communities and the Aligarh riot were contributory factors in this case.

Apart from the foregoing, a number of minor incidents have been reported, and at Agra both communities are reported to be purchasing lathis and knives.

4. Government Has No Policy to Deal with Communal Disturbances

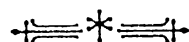
Extracts from a news report, 'Students and city Muslims responsible for arson'. *Hindustan Times*, 2 May 1946.

Lucknow, May 1. That the students of Aligarh Muslim University and city Muslims were responsible for starting the recent riots in the city is the verdict of the inquiry committee appointed by the UP Government. The committee consisted of the Commissioner of Agra Division and the Deputy Inspector General of Police, Western Range.

A copy of the report of the Committee was placed before the UP Legislative Assembly on Tuesday. The report urges the need for a Government policy in such cases of disturbances.

The committee holds that the students had no premeditated plan for the riots. It confirms that the origin of the riots was an altercation between two Muslim students and a cloth merchant named Krishna Behari in Mahavirganj market.

The findings of the committee vindicate the action of the UP Government in imposing the punitive tax on the students.



5. Riots in Bareilly

Extracts from a telegram by the Home Department, Government of the United Provinces, to the Home Department, Government of India; Naini Tal, 30 May 1946. File No. 5/24/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Following a minor dispute between volunteers of RSS Sangh and Muslims in a mosque serious communal tension developed in Bareilly city. Numerous cases of stabbing occurred and figures of casualties are seven killed, sixty injured. Nearly one hundred arrests made....

6. Labour cum Communal Trouble at Chheoki Ordnance Depot

Telegram by the Home Department, Government of the United Provinces, to the Home Department, Government of India; Naini Tal, 30 May 1946. File No. 5/25/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

On 26th May a riot occurred at Chheoki Railway Station following a strike at the Ordnance Depot on account of dismissal of one Suraj Narain, a leader of the Workers' Union. During strike management had recruited new staff chiefly Muslims and on termination of strike the removal of new employees became necessary. This resulted in a riot, brickbats being used, twenty four persons receiving injuries. As a consequence of the trouble at Chheoki communal feelings spread to Allahabad city and four cases of stabbing occurred. On 26th tension was heightened by announcement of meeting of Muslim workers and exhortation to people to close shops. Further cases of stabbing occurred on 26th, three Hindus and one Sikh being killed. On 28th following assault on Muslim workers at Chheoki, Section 144 CrPC issued prohibiting lathis, brickbats, slogans, which order was defied at end of shift. Police injured. Fourteen rounds fired under Additional District Magistrate's orders. Two killed, five injured. Workers reassembled en route Allahabad where three Muslims killed in stray assaults. Chheoki Depot closed. Area Commander has taken immediate action and reported to GOC, Lucknow. District authorities have taken all precautions including issue of orders under Section 144 in Allahabad City, enforcement of riot scheme, imposition of twenty four hour curfew. Extra Police has also reached. Commissioner and Deputy Inspector General of Police are on the spot.

7. A Tendency for Labour Disputes to Become Communal Disputes in the United Provinces

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for the United Provinces for the second half of May 1946. File No. 18/5/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Communal

Except in Jhansi where tension has been eased following the setting up of a Unity Board, Commissioners do not report any noticeable changes in communal tension, and a particularly disquieting feature is a tendency for a labour disputes to degenerate into a schism on communal lines. This led to a serious riot at Allahabad, where a clash occurred on May 25 at Chheoki Railway Station as a result of the discharge of employees, mainly Muslims, who had been engaged by the management of the Ordnance Depot there during a strike which followed the

dismissal of a leader of the workers' union. This clash, in which 24 persons were injured, was followed by four stabbings in Allahabad city on the 25th and five cases on the 26th when three Hindus and a Sikh were killed. On the 28th the defiance of orders under Section 144 CrPC resulted in the death of two persons and the wounding of five by police firing. Sporadic assaults continued until May 31 by which time as a result of a 24-hour curfew and other measures the situation had eased. The total death roll is reported to be sixteen.

In Bareilly, as a result of a minor clash between RSS Sangh volunteers and some Muslim students on May 23 a communal riot broke out on the 24th and stray assaults continued until the end of the month in spite of a 24-hour curfew, military patrolling and other measures. Seven persons were killed and over 60 injured.

The Hon'ble Minister for Police visited both Bareilly and Allahabad and assured the local authorities of Government's determination to suppress communal disorder and of their support to the local authorities and police in measures taken to this end.

Bareilly has been declared to be in a disturbed state under Section 15 of the Police Act, as have also Aligarh, Kasganj, Ambehta and Bahjoi. In Allahabad, communal strife was confined to the Chheoki workers and the city as a whole was not affected.

8. Petty Incidents with No Communal Basis Develop into Serious Clashes

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for the United Provinces for the first half of June 1946. File No. 18/6/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Communal

The serious riots at Bareilly and Allahabad fortunately had no repercussions in the other large cities of the Province and on the whole there was outwardly at least a slight improvement in the communal situation. Nevertheless Commissioners continue to report the situation as tense, uneasy or delicate and petty incidents which originally have no communal basis whatever tend to develop into more or less serious clashes. In the Azamgarh district a quarrel over the picking of mangoes by members of a Muslim shooting party was followed by a Muslim attack on a neighbouring Hindu village during the course of which 14 Hindus received gunshot wounds. In Bijnor a quarrel over a broken soda water bottle developed into a minor communal clash. The Bareilly riot appeared to have been brought under control and curfew had been relaxed when on June 9 two more fatal stabbing cases occurred and full curfew had once more to be imposed.

9. Rashtriya Swayamsewak Sangh Comes to Prominent Notice

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for the United Provinces for the first half of June 1946. File No. 18/6/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Volunteer Activities

It is, however, the Rashtriya Swayam Sewak Sangh which has most prominently come to notice. In Meerut, a well organised and disciplined camp of some 1200 members has been

opened; in Benares 1000 officers have been trained; a new branch has been started at Harduaganj in the Aligarh district; and further enlistments are reported in Muttra. As reported in my last letter, the immediate occasion of the riots in Bareilly was a clash between some Sangh volunteers and some Muslim students.

10. Sangh *Pracharaks* Undergo Training at Hathras

Extracts from Weekly Report No. 27, 5 July 1946. Weekly Reports; CID Records, Government of the United Provinces (1946); Uttar Pradesh State Archives.

... The RSSS have been carrying on their usual routine activities in many districts of the province. At Hathras instructors are being trained who will be expected to go in the countryside and train new volunteers. In Dehra Dun the membership of the Sangh has increased to 500....

11. Sangh and League National Guards Intensify Their Activities

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for the United Provinces for the second half of June 1946. File No. 18/6/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Political

There was a further increase in volunteer activities—particularly those of the RSS Sangh and of the Muslim League National Guards. The Sangh opened new branches in Bareilly and Budaun. Its camp at Benares was wound up during the first half of the month, while that at Meerut closed down on June 22 when the closing ceremony was attended by a gathering estimated at 10,000 inclusive of 1200 trainees and 2000 volunteers. Members of the HSRA [?] having obtained funds from sugar mill proprietors of the district, opened a training camp at Kasia in the Deoria district on June 8 after an assurance had been given to the District Magistrate that there would be no infringement of the Camps and Parades (Control) Order. The camp is being run by ex-INA personnel. A similar camp was held from June 5 to 21 by the RSPI [Revolutionary Socialist Party of India] at Deorighat in the Gorakhpur district. In Jhansi a students volunteer camp has been started.

With a view to canalising the latent desire to serve, which is the mainspring of all these activities government have under consideration schemes for compulsory social service and for the reestablishment of a civic guard.

As a counterblast to the activities of the RSS Sangh, the Muslim League is concentrating on the training of Muslim Guards, activity in this direction being particularly reported in the Aligarh, Muzaffarnagar and Budaun districts and in the Fyzabad Division. Khaksars had to be warned for carrying *belchas* and a few swords in Budaun and are again reported to have been active in Lucknow. In Lucknow also the Sunni Board is active and organized the recitation of the *Madhe Sahaba* on two occasions. So far there has been no Shia reaction.

Communal

There was some easing of the general communal situation and there has been no clash since my last report. The activities of the Muslim League Guards and the RSS Sangh in several districts, however contributed to keeping the general apprehension alive and all Commissioners report that at best there is an uneasy peace.

12. New Sangh Shakas in the United Provinces

Extracts from Weekly Report No. 29, 26 July 1946. Weekly Reports; CID Records, Government of the United Provinces (1946); Uttar Pradesh State Archives.

... A new branch of the RSS Sangh has been started in police station Iglas, district Aligarh and the membership of the branch at Khair has increased from 30 to 150. At Jaunpur one Ram Padarath Gupta has started a new branch of the RSSS which he has called Bal Shakti and which is open to boys up to the age of 10.

At Bareilly, where communal riots had interfered with the enrollment of primary members of the Muslim League, the Leaguers have been permitted to postpone their elections by one month, if within the prescribed time they have not been able to enrol 75% of the Muslim population as members. At Jaunpur a Binwat Association with a membership of about 25 Sunni boys is reported to have been started as a rival to the RSSS; members of this association practise *Lakari* (lathi play) in the evening....

13. Mahasabha Meeting at Gonda Asserts Communal Separatism

Extracts from Weekly Report No. 32, 16 August 1946. Weekly Reports; CID Records, Government of the United Provinces (1946); Uttar Pradesh State Archives.

... Dr Bishwanath Agarwal of Lucknow when addressing a Mahasabha meeting at Gonda, asserted there could be no unity between Hindus and Muslims and, after citing certain incidents in Aligarh and Hyderabad, stated that the Congress Government was proving harmful to the interests of the Hindus....

14. Direct Action Day in the United Provinces

Extracts from Weekly Report No. 32, 16 August 1946. Weekly Reports; CID Records, Government of the United Provinces (1946); Uttar Pradesh State Archives.

... The Muslim Leaguers observed Direct Action Day throughout the province on August 16. From reports received so far from some districts and the absence of reports of trouble from the remaining districts, this day appears to have passed off peacefully; it was observed by taking out processions and holding hartals and meetings....

15. Nationalist Muslims of Azamgarh Keep Shops Open on Direct Action Day

Extracts from Weekly Report No. 32, 16 August 1946. Weekly Reports; CID Records, Government of the United Provinces (1946); Uttar Pradesh State Archives.

... At Azamgarh shops of nationalist Muslims remained open throughout the district. At Bijnor some of the shopkeepers who had been persuaded to close their shops opened them immediately after the Muslim procession had passed their locality and by afternoon almost all the shops had been reopened; the tongawallas refused to observe a hartal. At Jalaun, Muslim League processionists shouted anti-Congress slogans such as "Congress Walon Ka Nash Ho", "Mahatma Gandhi Murdabad", "Jawahar Lal Murdabad". In Moradabad there was no hartal and Direct Action Day does not appear to have been observed with any enthusiasm....

16. Strident Speeches by League Students at Aligarh

Extracts from Weekly Report No. 33, 23 August 1946. Weekly Reports; CID Records, Government of the United Provinces (1946); Uttar Pradesh State Archives.

... At Aligarh Qazi Adeel Abbasi, a student stated that neither the British nor Hindus could check the Muslim League movement once started; at the same meeting Dr Abdullah Nasar, a University Professor, said that 10 crores of Muslims were quite willing to face 24 crores of Hindus, and Maulana Athar Ali Shah incited his audience by reciting a poem depicting the battle of Karbala....

17. Farrukhabad Muslims Asked to Prepare for Revolt

Extracts from Weekly Report No. 33, 23 August 1946. Weekly Reports; CID Records, Government of the United Provinces (1946); Uttar Pradesh State Archives.

... At Farrukhabad the Muslims were asked to be prepared to revolt and were told that if Sardar Patel wants a civil war the Muslims are prepared for it. In Dildarnagar, in Ghazipur, students marching in procession looted some Hindu shops; in protest the Hindus observed a hartal on August 17....

18. Police Fire Open at Four Places in Allahabad

Extracts from a news report, '4 killed and 43 injured at Allahabad'. *Hindustan Times*, 24 August 1946.

Allahabad, August 23. Three people have died and about 43 others injured, three seriously, as a result of the police opening fire at four places in Allahabad city today to quell disturbances which broke out following a stone throwing incident at Mirgan. Another death is reported to have occurred as a result of the disturbances. At one place, the police had to fire 15 rounds to disperse the crowd.

A number of persons have been arrested by the police and detained at the Kotwali. Twenty-four hour curfew has been imposed. Military has been called in.

The disturbances broke out at 1.30 p.m. today during prayers at Juma Masjid just adjoining the Kotwali. It is alleged a brickbat was dropped from somewhere on a congregation on the Grand Trunk Road just below the Juma Masjid. This was enough to incite the crowd to retaliation and soon brickbats rained towards the direction from which the first brickbat came....

19. League Imparts Lathi Training to Aligarh Muslims

Extracts from Weekly Report No. 37, 20 September 1946. Weekly Reports; CID Records, Government of the United Provinces (1946); Uttar Pradesh State Archives.

... The Sangh has been less active during the week under review. At Bareilly 400 members participated in games. At Benaras 500 volunteers attending a rally were told that the Sangh volunteers would not form part of the military or the police but would be used for service to the Hindus.

At Aligarh, lathi training is being imparted in private houses to batches of 10 to 20 Muslims. The City High School is giving similar training to 35 persons. In Bulandshahr, after Juma

prayers on September 13, one Mohd. Yusuf, relating his experience of the Bombay riots stated that he witnessed Hindus mercilessly beating Muslims without ascertaining whether the latter were Muslim Leaguers or nationalist Muslims; he therefore, advised all Muslims to join Muslim League....

20. Paramilitary Training for Muslim National Guard

Extracts from Weekly Report No. 38, 27 September 1946. Weekly Reports; CID Records, Government of the United Provinces (1946); Uttar Pradesh State Archives.

... The Lathi training of Muslim National Guards in private houses in Aligarh continues; the City High School has suspended such training. In Bareilly, the training of Muslim National Guards is to be carried on under a screen of secrecy. In Cawnpore, 200 Muslim National Guards gave a drill demonstration before 300 spectators on September 23; this number is seen drilling almost daily in 5 places in the city; it is said that these volunteers have signed a pledge to stake their lives for Islam. The enrollment and training of Muslim National Guards has also been reported from Budaun, Etawah, Fyzabad, Ghazipur, Jhansi, Naini Tal, Lucknow and Meerut....

21. The Stoning of an Agra Ramlila Procession Turns into a Riot

Extracts from Weekly Report No. 38, 27 September 1946. Weekly Reports; CID Records, Government of the United Provinces (1946); Uttar Pradesh State Archives.

... At Agra the communal situation developed into a riot on September 25 when the 'Banvas' procession of Ramlila was stoned in a Muslim locality. This incident, which was followed by stray assaults and exchanges of brickbats, had, up to the evening of September 26, resulted in 13 deaths and 100 other casualties. The riot is said to have its origin in the resentment of Muslims to the shouting of anti-Pakistan slogans by about 4000 processionists who accompanied Jai Prakash Narain the socialist leader to the COD [Chheoki Ordnance Depot] workers' conference on September 22; two Hindus had been beaten the same evening.

22. The League and Labour Unrest in Kanpur

Extracts from Weekly Report No. 38, 27 September 1946. Weekly Reports; CID Records, Government of the United Provinces (1946); Uttar Pradesh State Archives.

... The nerve centre of Cawnpore has been Messrs. Cooper Allen and Co, and the tanneries, whose employees had been under the influence of Communists. Large meetings of the workers of these concerns were held almost daily and addressed by Muslim Leaguers Sufi Manzoor Ali, Maulana Hasrat Mohani, MLA, Mohammad Faruq and Colonel Nilposh. The speakers condemned the United Provinces Government, accused Congress ministers of increasing their own salaries, denounced Congress labour leaders, threatened a general strike if arrested leaders were not released and appealed for 1000 volunteers for picketing. On September 26 the Muslim League office, where some of the meetings had been held, withheld permission for other labour meetings to be held there because the labourers had disregarded the instructions of the

Muslim League to call off the strike. Sufi Manzoor Ali and Maulana Ali and Maulana Hasrat Mohani, who appear to be acting as independent Muslim Leaguers, then held a meeting in the Communist Party office where the workers were exhorted to continue their strikes. In other factories in Cawnpore there has been agitation but no strikes....

23. Agra Under Twenty-four Hour Curfew

Extracts from a telegram by UPAO [?] to Intelligence Bureau, Home Department, Government of India; Lucknow, 27 September 1946. File No. 5/50/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Following report dated 26th September of communal riot in Agra received from District Magistrate and Superintendent Police Agra. Muslim stoning of Ramlila procession approximately 18 hrs on 25th in Malka Bazar led to widespread excitement and sporadic incidents resulting in two deaths and some fifty injured. Military aid requisitioned. Curfew imposed ... 24 hours curfew in force. Intense public nervousness continues but situation improving considerably....

24. Raja Mahendra Pratap Singh Willing to Give Daughter in Marriage to a Muslim

Extracts from Weekly Report No. 39, 11 October 1946. Weekly Reports; CID Records, Government of the United Provinces (1946); Uttar Pradesh State Archives.

... Raja Mahendara Pratap Singh, who has preached communal harmony at Saharanpur and Jhansi, has created quite a stir in Brindaban, particularly among the Sanatanists, by his alleged willingness to give his daughter in marriage to a Mohammedan....

25. League Consolidates Position with the Scheduled Castes

Extracts from Weekly Report No. 41, 25 October 1946. Weekly Reports; CID Records, Government of the United Provinces (1946); Uttar Pradesh State Archives.

... The Leaguers have been busy consolidating their position in the Scheduled Castes' Camp. A number of their meetings were attended by members of the depressed classes. At a private meeting of the Muslim League at Agra the need for communal harmony was urged and it was decided to track down the goondas who were defaming the Muslim League by sending threatening letters to Hindus....

26. Hindu Mahasabha Report on Agra Riots

Statement made by V.G. Deshpande, Honorary Secretary, All India Hindu Mahasabha; undated, probably October 1946. File No. C-100; All India Hindu Mahasabha Papers (1946); Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

The news circulated in the *Dawn* and the other newspapers that members of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh and Sikhs with naked swords in their hand were the aggressors in the Agra riots is lie. I visited Agra and studied the situation personally and absolutely reliable men

tell me that Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh had nothing to do with the Ramlila procession. Unarmed Rover Scouts accompanied the procession. There was no organized party of Sikhs with the procession either with unsheathed or sheathed swords. There may be stray individual Sikhs in the procession with sheathed kirpans.

The facts as I have learned in my personal visit are as follows. A peaceful Ramlila procession was passing through a Muslim mohalla. The Muslims were preparing for aggression on this procession. Since 12 noon shops were closed and excitement prevailed but no special precautions were taken by the police whose officials at Agra happen to be Muslim. Muslims pelted large number of brickbats and stones on the procession and [a] very large number of innocent citizens were injured. The stone throwing stopped only after the Magistrate resorted to firing. It is to be noted that there was no casualty as a result of this firing, the aggressors being undercover. The procession passed some distance and again a very large crowd of Muslims assaulted the procession and in the [ensuing] free fight persons belonging to both the communities were injured. In the tense situation Muslims were again the aggressors. One Muslim killed five Hindus by gunshots fired from the cover of his own house. The Muslims were the aggressors in this riot and now the names [of] Sikhs and members of Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh are being dragged in the riot episode and an attempt to escape from the blame is being made.

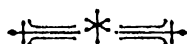
So far as the Police arrangements are concerned, I have only to say that shutting people in their houses is not the proper method of maintaining law and order. The goondas and the aggressors have to be severely punished and the fullest protection has to be given to innocent citizens to carry on their legitimate activities. Imposing twenty-four hours curfew and granting bails to goondas on generous scale is not an effective method of checking riots. Beyond doubt Muslims were the aggressors in this riot and penal collective fine has to be imposed upon them.

In the end I would appeal [to] my Muslim brothers not to indulge in this fratricidal war and be misled by the incitement of the Muslim League leaders. Hindus are determined not to concede Pakistan and civil war is a game in which, Muslims should at least by now realize, Muslims would be the losers in the end. Let us remain peacefully in this common motherland of ours and concentrate upon building a powerful free state of Hindustan.

V.G. Deshpande,
Hony. Secretary,
All India Hindu Mahasabha.

Copies sent to:

1. UPI, New Delhi.
2. API, New Delhi.
3. *Mahratta*, Poona.
4. *Free Hindusthan*, Bombay.
5. *Kesari*, Poona.
6. *Prabhat*, Bombay.



27. Rumours of Kidnapping in Lucknow Result in Communal Assaults

Extracts from Weekly Report No. 42, 1 November 1946. Weekly Reports; CID Records, Government of the United Provinces (1946); Uttar Pradesh State Archives.

... The baseless rumor about child-lifting current in Lucknow City has resulted in several persons being beaten by the public on suspicion, and the police have had considerable trouble on this account. Seven other districts also report communal incidents which might have turned into major communal clashes had the police not been vigilant....

28. Hindu Sabha Condemns Interim Government at Bareilly Meeting

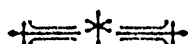
Extracts from Weekly Report No. 42, 1 November 1946. Weekly Reports; CID Records, Government of the United Provinces (1946); Uttar Pradesh State Archives.

... At a Hindu Sabha meeting (1500) at Bareilly speakers condemned the Interim Government for its policy of nonintervention, accused the Congress of betraying Hindus, suggested that all their coreligionists should carry knives for purpose of defence and compared the policy of the Muslim League with the ancient Muslim policy of converting nonbelievers with the sword. The speakers also suggested the throwing open of temples to depressed classes and Tribeni Sahi Misra, the president at this meeting, read the letter said to have been written by ex-Muslim League Habib-ur-Rahman which contained the alleged 'Direct Action' programme of the League. When addressing a gathering of pilgrims at Banda, two local Swamis gave exaggerated accounts of the happenings in East Bengal and appealed to their coreligionists to retaliate against the Muslims. Leaflets detailing atrocities in East Bengal were distributed at Cawnpore when calling on Hindus to observe Noakhali Day; anti-Muslim League slogans were written on roads in a few places. At a private meeting (4000) of the Sabha at Cawnpore the Hon'ble Jawahar Lal Nehru was called on to resign and the Bengal Ministry criticized; the president of the City Congress Committee said that incidents were not checked as 80 per cent of the Police force were Muslims; Mr Jaipuria, Director of the Swadeshi Cotton Mills, said he would devote his wealth for the good of the Hindu community....

29. Kanpur Scheduled Castes Do Not Observe Noakhali Day

Extracts from Weekly Report No. 42, 1 November 1946. Weekly Reports; CID Records, Government of the United Provinces (1946); Uttar Pradesh State Archives.

... A Muslim Leaguer when addressing a Scheduled Castes' meeting (1000) at Azamgarh advised his audience to have one flag and one leader; an attempt by a Congressman who tried to tell the Scheduled Castes that Muslims were trying to separate them from the Hindus, was ineffective. At Cawnpore, Scheduled Castes did not observe the Noakhali Day; they asked the Muslim League to issue them with distinctive badges for use during communal riots....



30. Mud Slung at Raja Mahendra Pratap Singh by Arya Samajists

Extracts from Weekly Report No. 42, 1 November 1946. Weekly Reports; CID Records, Government of the United Provinces (1946); Uttar Pradesh State Archives.

... The Arya Samajists have also preached communal hatred. At a meeting (2000) at the Arya Samaj Mandir in Aligarh inflammatory speeches were made exaggerating the happening in Bengal. At three meetings (500, 2000, 25000) during the annual session of the Arya Samaj, Cawnpore, speakers said that according to their religion they are expected to carry lathis with them; women were urged to keep large knives for domestic purposes with which they could also defend their honour. Arya Samajists caused a commotion at a meeting (1000) at Muttra which was addressed by Raja Mahendra Pratap Singh; they threw earth on the Raja because he refused to reply to their question whether there was any truth in his offer to marry his daughter to a Muslim....

31. A Train Stopped at Allahabad and Passengers Beaten Up

Extracts from Weekly Report No. 42, 1 November 1946. Weekly Reports; CID Records, Government of the United Provinces (1946); Uttar Pradesh State Archives.

... Communal tension has mounted still higher owing to the events in Bengal and Bihar. At Allahabad, Hindu workers after stopping the Moghul Sarai passenger train on 27th October, raised shouts that they would take revenge for Noakhali, and beat up six Muslim passengers....

32. Communal Situation in Gorakhpur District Over *Bakr Id*

Extracts from a letter by R.V. Vernede, District Magistrate, Gorakhpur, to Rajeshwar Dayal, Home Secretary, Government of the United Provinces; Gorakhpur, 6 November 1946. File No. 5/50/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

*Gorakhpur,
November 6, 1946*

Dear Rajeshwar Dayal,

This is a preliminary report of the various incidents which have happened up to date in this district over *Baqr Id*. Up to date there has only been one open clash resulting in the deaths of two Muslims and injuries to eight and injuries to an unspecified number of Hindus as a result of Police firing, of whom one man was arrested on the spot. This was at village Urwalia vide my wireless signal of this morning. I give further details below. In addition to this the following incidents have been reported.

(i) Finding of pigs in two mosques or Idgahs in the *dehat* at Bulahuwa, PS Kothibhar, near Chhitauni Sugar Mill and at village Sankhi, PS Pepeganj.

(ii) Ten Hindus were arrested near village Natwa, PS Mahrajanj trying to snatch cows from Muslims. All the above incidents took place on the 5th....

(iv) There was some tension in Zahidabad *mohalla* in the Gorakhpur City, owing to accusations and counter accusations between the Mahanth of Gorakhpur and the Muslim

League arising out of the escape of a cow from some Muslim and allegations of cow sacrifice in two place in the City said to be innovations.

2. The following are further details of the Urwalia incident. The one Hindu accused who has been arrested has stated that the attack was definitely premeditated and organised and messages came round at 12 o'clock midday on the 4th to a number of villages to the north and east of Urwalia to the effect that they must collect at midnight at a grove near Urwalia to stop cow sacrifice at that village. It was further added that unless every village produced its quota of men at the rate of one per house, the *panchayat* would levy fines. He gave the names of some of the organisers which include two notorious men from Khalilabad tehsil bordering Urwalia and one from Kotwali police station to the east of the Rapti. A large crowd estimated at 2000 or 3000 collected at the northeast at a grove just beyond Chadbari village close to Urwali and stayed there from midnight till 4 a.m. Meanwhile, another crowd had apparently collected from Basti side. At 4 a.m. they all come up close to Urwalia and the Head Constable who had been deputed with two constables in the unavoidable absence of SO [Station Officer] who had to be posted at Piprauli where there had been a recent tension, went out to find out what they wanted. They said they would go away if all the cows in the village were handed over to them. The Head Constable asked them to wait as he had sent for the SO and said that the matter would be settled before him. The crowd waited for about 2 or 2½ hours when they approached nearer the village from northeast and said that if the cows are brought out and tethered in front of them outside the village, they would wait the whole day if necessary for some officer to arrive. A few of the Muslims had come out behind the Head Constable [HC] and said they would not hand over their cattle. The HC told them to go back and he had hardly done so when the crowd which had now become very excited and out of control chased the retreating Muslims and killed an old man with lathis on the spot. The mob then rushed forward to attack the village. The HC fired two rounds of shot from his .12 bore shotgun and one constable fired one round from his .410 musket and the other constable had two misfires. As a result of this, some persons were injured and one of them Salik Chamar was arrested with the help of *chaukidars* and the crowd removed the other injured persons. By this time, they had surrounded the village. The Head Constable and the constables ran through to the west of the village where they saw that some houses had been set on fire and fired again about six rounds. In all it is said that about 7 or 8 Hindus were injured by this firing. The Muslims then ran away and one, a young Muslim, fell over and was caught and killed. Four houses were set on fire and the rioters who were armed with lathis, spears and *gandasas* [cleavers] struck at any of the Muslims they could find and in all injured four men and four women. They also looted at least 12 houses removing *chadars*, *taalis*, *lotas* [bedsheets and utensils] and some grain and it was alleged some cash and, in general, broke all the *gharas* [earthen pots] containing grain in use and in one to two cases, seem to have looted some grain from the *deharis* [stores?]. Finally, they released three cows intended for sacrifice and left before the Magistrate deputed by me with a police party arrived on the scene about 10.30 a.m. It is estimated that they remained in the village nearly an hour.

3. About half the houses in this village are inhabited by Hindus and the Police seem to be satisfied that they had nothing to do with this affair. A clerk of the Rural Development Department lives in this village and he was present throughout and has been able to give useful information about villages which participated and some of the Muslims have also been able to recognise the villages from which the attackers came and give a few names....

6. ... It is clear that the attack was premeditated and required considerable organisation. It is surprising that no information of this reached PS Sahjanwa or the Head Constable posted in Urwalia until the men had actually assembled within a mile of the village. This will require thorough investigation. It is possible that owing to the scarcity of the police, *chaukidars* had been called in to guard various cow sacrifice villages and were, therefore, unable to get information. There is also a serious complaint that two Hindu *chaukidars* took a prominent part in the attack and they are being suspended immediately and will be arrested when found. The Magistrate on the spot and the SO [Station Officer] Sahjanwa have been asked to utilise the Military Police also to raid the villages where the named accused reside at night or in the early morning in case they have not left the locality altogether. The Secretary District Congress Committee has sent out his workers to explain to all the villages concerned and to the accused if they meet them that the former should give all possible help and information and that the latter should surrender themselves if they wish to escape collective punishment and action under Section 87 and 88 CrPC. The failure of *Mukhias* and *Patwaris* to give information will also be looked into.

7. The number and seriousness of incidents may not be much larger or more serious than usual up to date but are obviously the direct result of Bengal and Bihar happenings and have been accompanied this year with much greater general apprehension and tension between the communities.

Yours Sincerely,
R. V. Verneda.
District Magistrate,
Gorakhpur.

33. Hindu Organisations Open Temples to Scheduled Castes

Extracts from Weekly Report No. 43, 8 November 1946. Weekly Reports; CID Records, Government of the United Provinces (1946); Uttar Pradesh State Archives.

... At Aligarh, Bareilly, Etah, Naini Tal and Muttra, Hindu organisations have opened temples to the depressed classes, taken food with them, invited them to religious ceremonies in their temples and shown other signs of their willingness to consider the demands of the Achuts for social uplift. At Bareilly, Muttra and Rae Bareilly Hindu organisations falsely charged Muslims of keeping Hindu women....

34. Riots at Garhmukteshwar Fair

Extracts from a news report, '46 dead; 39 injured'. *Hindustan Times*, 8 November 1946.

Meerut, November 7. Forty-six persons were killed and 39 injured as the result of a communal clash on the night of November 6 at the Ganges fair at Garhmukteshwar in Meerut district. Sixteen bodies have already been taken to Meerut for postmortem examination. Thirty persons were arrested while escaping the looted property.

Police had to open fire to control the riotous mob. One person died as a result of police firing. There were some cases of incendiarism. Military has been called to assist the civil authorities in maintaining order....

35. Garhmukteshwar Trouble Spreads to the Whole District

Extracts from Weekly Report No. 43, 8 November 1946. Weekly Reports; CID Records, Government of the United Provinces (1946); Uttar Pradesh State Archives.

... Very serious communal riots occurred in the Garhmuktesar fair on November 6 and 7. The troubles later spread to the whole district. The casualties are very heavy....

36. Casualties Feared Heavy at Garmukteshwar Fair

Extracts from a telegram by Governor's Secretary, United Provinces, to the Viceroy's Private Secretary; 8 November 1946. File No. 5/50/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Communal rioting broke out on 6th November at Garhmuktesar Fair, a Hindu bathing festival on the Ganges in Meerut district. Small incident in an amusement sideshow led to overwhelming attack with arson and looting on few Moslem stall holders and carriage drivers resulting in 46 dead. On 7th November mobs from [the] Fair mostly Punjabis proceeded to Garhmuktesar town 3 miles away and attacked Moslem residents and burnt Moslem houses. Casualties feared heavy....

37. 250 Killed in Garhmukteshwar Town

Extracts from a telegram by Governor's Secretary United Provinces to the Viceroy's Private Secretary; 9 November 1946. File No. 5/50/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

... Some 250 people were killed in town on Thursday. Majority of them probably Moslems. All available troops and police have been concentrated in area where local situation is reported to be quiet since noon yesterday.

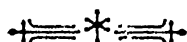
Premier and Home Minister left this morning for Garhmuktesar and latter has since reported by telephone from Meerut that situation there is very tense and that cases of stabbing have occurred in Meerut town itself and in rural area.

38. Garmukteshwar Pilgrims' Train Attacked En Route to Delhi

Extracts from a news report, 'Attack on train near Meerut'. *Hindustan Times*, 10 November 1946.

Following Thursday's rioting at Garmukteshwar where about 200 people were killed, a passenger train mostly full of pilgrims returning from Garmukteshwar to Delhi was attacked by hooligans at about 10 a.m. on Saturday at Dasna Railway Station on the EIR [East Indian Railway], about five miles from Ghaziabad and about 20 miles from Delhi. Cautious estimates put the number of killed and injured in the outrage at 50 and over 100, respectively.

Another party of pilgrims was attacked at Shahjahanpur, 18 miles from Meerut on the Meerut Garhmukteshwar Road. It is reported that about 45 persons, including women and children, were done to death and nearly 25 injured there....



39. Villagers of Shahjahanpur Retaliate

Extracts from a telegram by Governor's Secretary, United Provinces, to the Viceroy's Private Secretary; 11 November 1946. File No. 5/50/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Shahjahanpur ... is a village with Moslem population in Meerut District. A Hindu party returning from Garhmuktesar mela was attacked by the villagers by way of retaliation.

40. 83 Killed in Shahjahanpur

Extracts from a telegram by Governor's Secretary, United Provinces, to the Secretary to the Governor General, Public Department, Government of India; 11 November 1946. File No. 5/50/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

... Dispersal of *mela* pilgrims started on November 9th. Panic and tension on routes resulted in following incidents (1) Hindu pilgrims attacked two motor buses on Hapur road, killed two Muslim drivers and three Muslim passengers. (2) Village Shahjahanpur on Meerut road, already reported killed 83 Hindus and 3 Muslims. (3) Dasna railway station. Muslim mob attacked train but driven off. 9 killed. (4) Meerut City. 15 killed in stray assaults. (5) Amroha and Hasanpur (Moradabad District). Returning Hindu pilgrims attacked. Injured sent to hospital. None killed....

41. Meerut District Tense and Seriously Disturbed

Telegram by Governor's Secretary, United Provinces, to the Secretary to the Governor General, Public Department, Government of India; 12 November 1946. File No. 5/50/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

... At Harsaon on Ghaziabad road 37 Muslim men, women and children killed. Fatal casualties also in nearby village Indergarhi including 4 women. One woman previously abducted. 6 killed on roadside. Whole area Hapur to Ghaziabad very panicky.

Disturbances on Ghaziabad-Moradabad road. Military patrol recovered 7 dead bodies. Meerut City still disturbed; stabbing and murder cases continue. 29 deaths up to November 11th. Umroha and Hasanpur areas of Moradabad very disturbed following incidents on return of injured Muslims from Ghaziabad....

42. The Mayhem of Meerut District Begins to Abate

Telegram by Governor's Secretary, United Provinces, to the Secretary to the Governor General, Public Department, Government of India; 14 November 1946. File No. 5/50/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Situation in Meerut-Bulandshahr area still grave, though as dispersal of pilgrim traffic is near completion, local authorities hope the worst is over. Following incidents reported, on Delhi-Bulandshahr road 1 pilgrim cart attacked and 6 Hindus injured. Four Muslims killed on Garhmuktesar-Meerut road. Three Muslims killed and burnt and one injured at Maripatr [?]

railway station. Eleven Muslim camel drivers attacked on Meerut-Delhi road, 2 escaped but remaining 9 not accounted for. In Meerut district, city is quiet but 1 Muslim killed on road near Pilkhua and 4 Muslims found dead in a grove near Pilana. Various reports of mobs collecting round Muslim houses dispersed successfully by Police.

43. Aspects of Garhmukteshwar Riots

Article, 'What happened at Garhmukteshwar', by O.P. Singal. *People's Age*, 22 December 1946.

At the Meerut Session of Congress, Sardar Patel raised the slogan: "Sword shall be met with sword". Congressmen did not have to look to Noakhali and Bihar. The shadow of Garhmukteshwar hung over the entire Congress Session.

I made extensive enquires about the Garhmukteshwar incidents and met several correspondents of the nationalist dailies, a UP Minister and those communist workers who were present in the Garhmukteshwar *mela* and who did their best to save human lives.

All these were agreed on one point: that the riot at the fair and the attack on the town were both well organised affairs.

RSS Responsible

The Congress Minister mentioned above refused to specify who was responsible for the organisation of these riots. But Major General Shah Nawaz of the INA in a statement held the Rashtriya Swayamsewak Sangh (RSS) responsible for it and some other Congressmen shared his view.

One of them told me that a few days before these riots a big rally of RSS was held at Meerut, which was presided over by Rai Bahadur Gujar Mal Modi, notorious owner of several mills and factories at Bagamabad, (also called Modinagar), district Meerut. Very provocative speeches were made at this meeting and people were called upon to avenge Noakhali.

Another gentleman who should be in the know of things told me that the Rohtak, Delhi and Meerut branches of the RSS sent their volunteers to the Garh *mela*. It is reported the leaders had their plans ready but the volunteers were not informed where they were going. They were only told that they had to go to some unknown destination and should carry enough warm clothing with them.

Well Organised

Communist workers who were themselves present in the *mela* also told me that with their own eyes they saw members of the RSS and some volunteers of the Mahabir Dal of the Punjab organising street corner meetings and small processions in the *mela* and heard them delivering inflammatory speeches and shouting provocative slogans.

I do not propose here to describe how the massacre took place at the fair, how later the mob attacked Garhmukteshwar town. But I will stress one fact.

Eight per cent of the total population of the minority community of about 2000 in this town had in the last elections voted against the League and for the nationalist candidate. The Congress Minister I met at Meerut told me that none of these 2000 were to be found in the town after the riots but he could not tell me how many were killed and how many managed to escape.

Among the killed was Maulvi Nuruddin, a leading Congressman of the district, I feel that all patriots should know and remember these facts.

Police Absent

At Garhmukteshwar the riot had begun on November 6. By the evening of November 8 cases of assault had taken place in the Meerut City too. But there were very few policemen to be found patrolling the streets on November 9.

As the number of assaults increased, the rationing system in the city collapsed and the municipal administration came to a standstill. Daytime curfew was clamped on the city. But the stabbings continued in spite of it and other repressive orders and went on for full five days.

In fact, a correspondent of a leading nationalist daily of Delhi was of the opinion that during the riots there was a virtual breakdown of civil administration in Meerut district. He told me, "it might not have been sinful or communally inspired, but it certainly revealed utter negligence." He gave the following instances: The military was sent very late to Garhmukteshwar. There are reports that military officers demanded that they should be handed over the entire administration and all power in the affected areas before they would agree to send their force. After a lot of haggling between civil and military authorities some two or three platoons were sent.

Military Negligence

The riot stopped for some time on the first day but owing to indifference and negligence on the part of the military that was posted on the road between the fair and the town, a mob succeeded in raiding the town on the second day.

The correspondent ended by saying that the Ministry was entirely noncommunal and sincere in its attempts to check riots but was not getting sufficient cooperation from the services.

But the Minister of the UP Government whom I saw at Meerut denied this. He said that the Ministry's relations with the Military have been consistently very good.

"But," he continued, "because of tension all over and the need of military everywhere, we could not send adequate forces to Garhmukteshwar. Even in the Meerut cantonment, sufficient forces were not available when the need was urgent."

However, the Minister could not give any satisfactory explanation about the negligence shown by the contingent that was sent to Garhmukteshwar. In fact, when I questioned him on this point, his self-confident tone disappeared and it became obvious that he was hastily searching for some explanation. But he could not do more than give such excuses as: "How could the police know that next day the town would be attacked? How could the military check people from infiltrating into the town?"

And finally he admitted that—"they were helpless before that huge mob."

But many among the common people—Hindus and Muslims—did not feel helpless even when faced with such mammoth mobs of rioters.

At the Garhmukteshwar fair itself many Hindu peasants, a large number of Jat peasants among them, successfully saved their Muslim co-villagers and other Muslims by dressing them in female clothes. They brought them home safely along with the women of their family. To give only one name Munshi Nandkishore of Pilukhwa, district Meerut, thus saved the lives of a dozen of his fellow villagers.

People Save Lives

In the city of Meerut also the good sense of the common people save many lives. Thus Mian Munne, Mohammad Yaha and another Muslim Municipal Commissioner rescued many Hindus; a number of Hindu homes gave shelter to their isolated Muslim neighbours. Three young Muslim Communists living in the storm centre of riots fought hard all the five days against the goondas of their own community.

At Modinagar riot mongers made frantic efforts to work up riot, but could not succeed due to the vigilance of the workers organised under the Red flag and of the peasants of the surrounding villages.

As soon as the news of Garhmukteshwar reached Modinagar, mischief mongers got going and a worker was killed while coming out of the factory.

And to cap it all, the manager of Modi's factories called a meeting of Muslim workers and told them that the management could not take any responsibility for their safety and that those who wanted to go home would be given leave.

This naturally created great panic among Muslim workers and they began to fly from Modinagar.

Hindu workers and leaders of the union tried to persuade them to stay. They told their Muslim brethren, "Don't go. As long as any one of us is alive not one of you will be hurt."

But the panic among the Muslims was too great. Many of them left the place but after giving a promise to their Hindu brethren that as soon as the situation returned to normal they would come back to resume their united struggle against the millowner.

Communists Excluded

Communist leaders of the union approached local Congress leaders to start a joint peace campaign. They refused to cooperate.

Ch. Chanan Singh, Parliamentary Secretary to the UP Government, came and formed a peace committee at Modinagar but he also excluded the Communists from joint work pleading "Such is Rafi Saheb's (Mr Rafi Ahmed Kidwai, UP Home Minister) order."

But the Communists continued their work.

They organised a meeting of the *chaudharies* (headmen) of Begumabad and organised a joint Hindu-Muslim volunteer corps which fought rumours and panic and guarded the approaches to the town. One day they caught a horseman who was spreading rumours that a neighboring village had been attacked.

On November 13, Communist workers organised a meeting of *chaudharies* (headmen) of 36 villages. All those who attended took a pledge to keep peace in their area, to defend each other and to beat back the attackers, no matter to which community they belonged.

Since then in almost all of these villages peace committees have been formed.

Later the Kisan Sabha organised a meeting of representatives of 18 villages at Bilochpura which is a Muslim village. This meeting decided to form a joint volunteers corps. Now these volunteers are touring the villages asking people not to fall prey to false rumours, and to keep peace.

A similar meeting was held at village Hilawadi in which representatives of 14 villages took part.

In the town of Ritait where tension was particularly high the Communists held a public meeting on November 11, took out a procession which immediately eased the situation.

In Meerut City also the Communist Party sent out peace squads as early as on November 7 and also held a public meeting. The Party leaders appealed to the Congress and League leaders to join in its work but there was no response from them.

Riotmongers Go Free

Later, they organized an all-parties peace committee but in the meantime Minister Kidwai reached Meerut and he ordered that the Communists must be excluded from the peace committee.

And now comes the news that Shanti Tyagi, leader of the Modinagar and Meerut Communists and Mutsaddilal, another Communist worker, have been arrested by the local police.

But of course, the police has not thought it fit to take any action against the fat, rich patrons of the communal bodies responsible for the riots.

It has been reported in the press that the Government of the UP is going to appoint a committee to inquire into the riots in the Meerut district. The people of Meerut must see that there is real inquiry, which will unmask the ugly face of the riotmongers and their accomplices inside the police and the bureaucracy, and is not allowed to become an instrument of whitewash their black deeds.

44. Arya Samajists Condole Madan Mohan Malaviya's Demise

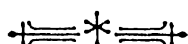
Extracts from Weekly Report No. 44, 15 November 1946. Weekly Reports; CID Records, Government of the United Provinces (1946); Uttar Pradesh State Archives.

... The Hindus and Arya Samajists, in almost all districts, held meetings and hartals to condole the death of Pt Madan Mohan Malviya and to raise collections for their relief funds; at many such meetings the Muslim League was condemned and audiences were urged to form 'Hindu Sangathans' as the Late Pt Malaviya had said before his death that Hindu-Muslim unity was not possible. At some meetings the Hon'ble Pandit J.L. Nehru was severely criticised for having ordered firing on Bihar Hindus....

45. Sangh Activities in the United Provinces

Extracts from Weekly Report No. 44, 15 November 1946. Weekly Reports; CID Records, Government of the United Provinces (1946); Uttar Pradesh State Archives.

... The volunteers of [the] Sangh have been active in no less than eighteen districts. In most districts they associated themselves with meetings organised to condole the death of Pt Malaviya. In a few districts, they are visiting rural areas to popularise their movement. They are still looked on with considerable suspicion by Muslims. At Allahabad, instructors of the Sangh are training 500 students in physical exercise and 70 in the use of lathis; the trainees are urged to follow the example of famous Hindu Leaders of the past who have defended their religion....



46. League Raises Funds for Bihar and Meerut Muslims

Extracts from Weekly Report No. 44, 15 November 1946. Weekly Reports; CID Records, Government of the United Provinces (1946); Uttar Pradesh State Archives.

... The Muslim League has been holding meetings in many districts to raise funds for Muslim riot victims in Bihar and Meerut and to condemn the Bihar Congress Government....

47. Aligarh Muslim University Students Receive Lathi Training

Extracts from Weekly Report No. 47, 6 December 1946. Weekly Reports; CID Records, Government of the United Provinces (1946); Uttar Pradesh State Archives.

... About 250 students of the MU [Muslim University], Aligarh are receiving training in lathi drill....

48. Workers' Efforts to Block Riots in Kanpur

Extracts from an article, 'Red flag saves Cawnpore'. *People's Age*, 8 December 1946.

Who engineers riots and why? Who battles against them and can the battle be won? The experience of Cawnpore during October and the first fortnight of November affords a valuable reply to these questions.

Readers of the *People's Age* are aware of the big wave of strikes in the textiles and leather industries, which swept over Cawnpore during September and the brutal, repressive measures with which it was put down.

Flushed by their 'victory', the employers immediately attempted to follow it up with a series of attacks on the workers' conditions of service. To their surprise, however, in almost every case the workers beat back their offensive.

In the Muir Mill, the employers' effort to work a half day shift of five hours was foiled by the workers. The management had to work a four-hour shift.

In the Swadeshi Mill, the bosses tried to reduce the recess time from half an hour to just ten minutes. Again the workers' resistance promptly restored the old recess time.

But the manager was far from being shaken up. Together with the owners of the Atherton West Mill, he tried a new trick. They wanted Muslim holidays (like *Bakr-Id*) to be given only to Muslim workers and Hindu holidays only to the Hindu workers. Again nixed opposition foiled this crude conspiracy at communal trouble.

In the JK Jute Mill workers began a 'slow down' campaign after their strike had to be withdrawn. The management sent into their mill committee one of their spies. As soon as he was discovered, he was paraded in the mill with a blackened face.

The management retaliated by summarily discharging five mill committee leaders. The workers hit back by bringing the mill to a stop. They surrounded the manager inside the mill compound, demanding immediate reinstatement of the leaders.

For three long hours they argued. The Police were sent for and even firing was threatened. But no worker budged. In the end they won on the spot. All the leaders were reinstated.

For the owners, these skirmishes were enough of an indication to show that the workers were far from beaten. So, as a last step they planned communal riot. And 'Noakhali' came almost like a windfall.

Already the nationalist press had taken up Noakhali with a maddening zeal. *Veer Bharat* of the mill owner Ram Ratan Gupta was the most vicious. Suddenly a new organisation sprouted into activity. It was the Hindu Sangh. RSS volunteers too became active as never before.

Blood for Blood

On October 22, a leaflet issued by the Hindu Sangh was distributed in the city. It was signed by Sir Padampat Singhanian, President, (owner of JK Group). Ram Ratan Gupta, Bagla, Jaipuria, (owner—Swadeshi Mill), JP Shrivastave (Victoria Mill), Hargovind Misra (hosiery factory), some big landlords, etc.

The handbill laid thick the Noakhali atrocities and called for a hartal on October 29 “in sympathy with the sufferers”.

Two days later, another handbill came out, this time signed, not by the mill owners but by the Sangh Secretaries. It was an appeal to the mill owners (the signatories to the first handbill of the Sangh!) to close down their mills on October 29.

Despite Section 144, RSS boys held parades, addressed group meetings, demanded “blood for blood:” a terrific whisper campaign, leafleteering went on, common predecessors of riots everywhere!

The programme for the 29th was a hartal followed by a huge procession and also a meeting at Phool Baug, even if “in defiance of all bans”.

On October 24, 25 and 26, the Arya Samaj held its annual conference in Lenin Park. Over five thousand attended and, characteristically enough, despite Section 144, it was allowed as a ‘religious function’. The speakers however freely attacked the Congress and the Communists, and a resolution was passed, changing the name of the park from Lenin Park to Dayanand Park!

The City Congress leaders did nothing to intervene.

The Leaguers, on the 27th, marched their National Guards through the main shopping centre, and only added to the tenseness.

Later the Congress supported the hartal, but expressed itself against the procession and the meeting.

As things reached the boiling point, the District Magistrate pulled up the Sangh Leaders and asked them to invite the League to participate in the hartal, as the latter “also sympathised with Noakhali victims”.

Magistrate Comes In

One Hindu Sangh leader then wrote to the local Muslim League asking them to join in and sent them the resolution to be moved. The latter had no objection to joining, but wanted the resolution to include references to the events in Bihar also. Obviously the Hindu Sangh turned down this demand.

October 29 saw one of the most complete hartals in Cawnpore. Not a shop remained open. Thousands thronged to the Phool Baug at the call of the Sangh, the latter’s triumph at the cost of the Congress. But police prevented the meeting from being held.

Simultaneously at Koolika (residence of Mr Ram Ratan Gupta), over 4000 met, addressed by Ram Ratan Gupta, Jaipuria and even Pyarelal Agrawal, prominent Congress leader of the city.

“We are first Hindus then everything else. Those who talk of Hindu-Muslim unity are traitors. Noakhali will be avenged,” these were the themes of the speeches. That ended the programme!

And yet Cawnpore was saved from riots. How did this happen?

It was because the Cawnpore of a lakh and more workers, Hindus and Muslims, followed the Mazdoor Sabha, and refused to be trapped by the Sangh.

Against all the slogans of the Sangh, Yusuf, the veteran leader of the Sabha, and his colleagues had one rallying cry: "Ours is a battle for *roti* [bread] and it must not be made a battle between *dadhi* [Muslim beard] and *choti* [a lock of hair kept on the back of the head by Hindus], which is what the employers want."

And workers who only a few weeks back had fought for their *roti* together, and intended to do so again, warmly responded to this call.

As for the victims of Noakhali, the Mazdoor Sabha was second to none in its sympathies with them. But, as was pointed out by Yusuf, a strike engineered by the mill owners was certainly not meant to show sympathy. It was meant to disrupt the ranks of Hindu and Muslim workers.

The Sabha's battle was a very difficult one. The plot seemed to be in the common interest of every mill owner, and the European bosses readily supported it. Jobbers and head jobbers from all mills actively worked for the strike.

Battle Begins

Two days before the strike, threatening of workers began; those who opposed the strike faced victimisation in a number of mills.

On the 29th, the owners' stooges opened out. In the Swadeshi Mills some workers were almost physically thrown out, when they insisted on working. In Sir Padampat's JK Group the management actually forced out the workers. But that was the only success they had.

In Atherton West Mills, Mazdoor Sabha organisers held running group meetings inside the mill to condemn the Noakhali atrocities and also to expose the game behind the strike.

Such was their work that out of about 55,000 textile workers (excluding those of the JK Group), only a bare 1500 remained out. The rest worked to smash the owners' conspiracy.

There was no strike of the leather workers in the Harness Factory, or in any other factory, with not more than a couple of exceptions.

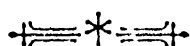
That was Noakhali Day. But the owners did not take their defeat lying low.

On November 4, Sir Padampat addressed a meeting of 10,000, over 3000 RSS volunteers keeping order. Despite Section 144 the meeting was allowed because "it was held in the private grounds of Sir Padampat". Of course, the speeches can well be imagined....

49. Hindu Volunteer Groups Undergo Martial Training

Extracts from Weekly Report No. 48, 13 December 1946. Weekly Reports; CID Records, Government of the United Provinces (1946); Uttar Pradesh State Archives.

... The Arya Veer Dal volunteers have performed drill at Agra, Bijnor, Farrukhabad and Lucknow. Five volunteers of this Dal have been sent from Farrukhabad to Brindaban (Muttra) for training in the use of spears, knives and swords. At Agra funds are being raised for the Rakshak Dal. The Nagar Ram Sena and the Hindu Rashtra Sena Volunteers of Lucknow are also being drilled....



50. Raja of Jaunpur Doing Propaganda for Rashtriya Swayamsewak Sangh

Extracts from Weekly Report No. 48, 13 December 1946. Weekly Reports; CID Records, Government of the United Provinces (1946); Uttar Pradesh State Archives.

... The Raja of Jaunpur is touring the rural areas of this district doing propaganda for the RSSS; he held a village meeting (3000) at which he criticised the Congress and the Government and held the League responsible for the disturbances in Bengal....

51. Muslim League Criticises Gwalior Durbar

Extracts from Weekly Report No. 48, 13 December 1946. Weekly Reports; CID Records, Government of the United Provinces (1946); Uttar Pradesh State Archives.

... At Agra and Jhansi the Muslim League workers have criticised the Gwalior Durbar for alleged [crimes?] perpetrated against Muslims; they are raising funds for relief of Muslim refugees from this State.

52. Moradabad Ahrars Critical of League and Sangh

Extracts from Weekly Report No. 48, 13 December 1946. Weekly Reports; CID Records, Government of the United Provinces (1946); Uttar Pradesh State Archives.

... At Moradabad the Ahrars have condemned the speeches of Hindu leaders, the Kashmir Government and the activities of the RSSS. At Saharanpur they held a meeting (250) at which the League's 'Direct Action' programme was held responsible for the communal disorders and the Leaguers were asked to launch such a programme against the British; the Ahrars of this district are also collecting subscriptions for Maulana Hussain Ahmad Madni's fund for the relief of riot victims....

53. The Story of a Rape in Noakhali

A translation of an alleged autobiographical account of Amiyabela of Noakhali published in the United Provinces by the Hindi magazine *Kalyan* of October 1946, and reprinted in *Mahratta*, a Pune newspaper on 13 December 1946. The title of the piece, 'A Heart Touching Appeal Of A Daughter Of Bengal'. The UP government considered the piece objectionable. Extracts are presented below. File No. 1116/1947, Series No. 1-40; Home (Police) Department, Government of the United Provinces (1946); Uttar Pradesh State Archives.

Fathers in duty! Brothers, and friends! I am looted. My chastity has been destroyed by violent hooligans....

I endeavored as best as I could to save my husband and sons. I fought. I could wish that the wicked took my life, but they did not. They robbed me of my virtue (lit. religion). My honour has been looted and I was deprived of everything....

... Even today I am lying in their house veiled in a *burqa*, burning in the hell fire of their house....

Oh, Shankaracharya! Oh, Ramanujacharya! Oh, Nimbarkacharya! Oh, Madhavacharya! Oh, Vallabbacharya! Oh, Chaitanya and descendants of Hityananda! Oh, you different Acharyas of [the] ascetic order! Where the hell have you gone (lit. where have you died)? What thunderbolt has fallen on your religion? Oh Brahmins! Oh Kshatriyas! Oh, Vaisyas! Oh, Sudras! Does not your blood boil at seeing this plight of your sisters (and) daughters? Why are you alive at all?

Oh, you brave Sikhs—the descendants of Guru Nanak and Guru Govindsingh—has your well-known bravery gone to sleep today, or is it lost? Should a *Bandu* virgin be abducted (and) the chastity of a chaste Hindu woman be destroyed while you are alive? What should I say? Will the *Kirpan* of the Sikhs at this juncture, shine while remaining in sheaths alone?

Oh, Malaviyaji! It is learnt that you fainted with pain hearing my tragic story....

Oh, Gandhibaba! I regarded you as father in-duty in (your) capacity as the father of the nation. But it seems that your heart is harder than stone. This is my plight while you are alive. You, of course, have also seen the condition of Bengal. You are not ashamed to give inopportune message of peace....

Oh, brother Jawahar and old grandfather Patel! I had high hopes from you, but you have, however, brought ruin on us. Oh, you did not even turn towards me and glance at me. You were not ashamed at the time of showering bullets on the chests of my sentimental Bihari brothers who were overflowing with sympathy for me.

Brother Subhas, it is learnt that you are not dead as yet, but so far as I am concerned you are dead. Is it that you are hiding your face, after hearing the story of my bad condition and finding yourself unable to rescue me....?

Oh, you devotees of Rama and Hanuman! Fie upon your devotion. Today, Sita is not only abducted, nor she is only imprisoned in the Asoka Vatike (a small garden) of Ravana's, but she is totally dishonoured. Will not the Lanka of the wicked Ravana be burnt, even now? Oh, your tail has already caught fire! Take a leap and mount upon every building of the tyrant Ravana's Lanka and reduce it to ashes immediately at this very moment....

Oh, mothers, sisters! Now give up [any] hopes of these impotent males. Take [a] dagger in your hand and become a war goddess—goddess Kalika—wearing a garland of skulls. Come out of your houses and quench the burning flames of fire in your heart by (pouring) the blood of every desperado (on it)....

Unfortunate (and) hysterical daughter of Bengal,
Amiyabala,
residing in Noakhali.
Kalyan, October 1946.

54. Hapur Riots in the Wake of the Garhmukteshwar Disturbances

Wireless message dated 15 December 1946 from Deputy Inspector of Police, Western Range, to the Inspector General of Police, Lucknow. File No. 5/50/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Hapur situation under control. One Muslim killed some twelve others injured one dangerously. Some six Hindus also admitted hospital none seriously injured. Damage by arson estimated at over a lakh. Mostly Muslim property but some Hindus shops accidentally involved. Consider second Garhmukhteshwar narrowly averted by prompt action by district authorities. SI

dispersed two large Hindu mobs converging on Hapur led by two armed sadhus and one horseman. Sadhus and others arrested. Meerut city panicked but no incidents yet reported from Ghaziabad or elsewhere. Situation highly inflammable. Have ordered up two platoons military police Aligarh coy. Am remaining here for present. For Hindu girl stabbed reported in yesterday's signal please read Hindu boy.

55. Hapur Placed Under Twenty-four Hour Curfew

Extracts from wireless message dated 16 December 1946 from Deputy Inspector of Police, Western Range, to the Inspector General of Police, Lucknow. File No. 5/50/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Hapur situation unchanged with 24 hours curfew still in force. Two half burned Muslim bodies found just outside town. Probably murdered on 14th by converging Hindu mob....

56. Meerut Hindu Relief Committee's Review of Hapur Disturbances

Extracts from a report by Meerut Hindu Relief Committee, Hindu Sabha, and Prakashwati Sood, MLA (UP); 21 December 1946. File No. CL 10; All India Congress Committee Papers (1946); Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

Communal Disturbances in Hapur Review of Events

... Inquiries reveal that both the Hindus and the Muslims of Hapur have been very peaceful and there is a very good reason for it. Hapur is a noted business centre in whole of India, where a very large number of Hindus have flocked in simply to carry on trade and no one can say that these trading people are quarrelsome or find it advantageous to them that there continues disorder in the society. The Muslims are mostly zamindars, labour class and agriculturists with the exception of 2 or 3 persons running good business.

It was reported by very reliable persons that since the present police station officer and the Tahsildar had taken over charge of their duties, they had been proving themselves pro Muslim to the core of the Muslim League brand.... It is alleged that since Garhmuktesar Mela they had been indulging in circulating stories of Garh communal riots in such colourful way that the feelings of one community were enraged against the other....

A very large number of Hindus ... of every *mohalla*, have [has] been arrested simply on the reports of fanatic Muslims who made it a point to rope in every respectable Hindu citizen and how far all this is tolerable and justifiable according to the high principles of democracy, is for the Congress Govt to explain.

Hon'ble Mr Rafi Ahmad Kidwai, Home Minister, UP Government, paid a visit to Hapur on Dec. 15 and the most surprising thing was that even noted Congressmen of the town like L. Laxmi Narain, MLC could get information of his visit when he had returned back to Delhi. His stay at Hapur was utilised by the Muslim Leaguers to poison his ears with their own propaganda and showing to him objects of their own interest.

Demands

The Hindu citizens of Hapur demand that a suitable inquiry may be made into the conduct to the police, which has been openly pro Muslim and officers found guilty should be immediately sacked, and dealt with accordingly.

Thorough searches should be made in the houses of Muslims, in quarters from where rockets were thrown, and the culprits be brought to book.

All the ring leaders of Muslim mobs who tried to attack temples and mohallas and houses of respectable citizens should be immediately rounded up. Respectable citizens arrested simply at the whim of Muslim fanatics be released on bail.

The Goonda element in the City should also be immediately rounded up and the Tahsildar and SO [Station Officer] should be immediately transferred so that confidence may be restored. Reports of Hindu victims hitherto refused to be recorded should also be immediately registered and cases against the culprits be immediately started.

Repeated experience of communal riots in the towns of UP has clearly revealed that it is very high preponderance of Muslim Police Officers in key posts who are invariably communal in outlook which is responsible for the same. It is high time that UP Government should open its eyes and reduce their strength to 14 per cent according to their population statistics in the province, instead of 75 per cent which they without any justification enjoy up till now.

57. Hindus of Hapur Face Large Collective Fine

Extracts from a telegram by Amolakchand Mile, Secretary, Hapur Congress Committee, to Acharya Kriplani, President, Indian National Congress; Hapur, 23 December 1946. File No. CL 10; All India Congress Committee Papers (1946); Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

Hapur General Congress Committee has learnt with great astonishment and regret that District Magistrate Meerut on 21st inst has imposed on account of recent communal riot at Hapur a collective fine of two lac rupees on the Hindus of Hapur....

Amolakchand Mile,
Secretary,
Congress Committee.

58. Hapur Hindus Protest Against the Collective Fine

Extracts from a memorandum by the Hindus of Hapur, to the Government of the United Provinces; undated, probably December 1946/January 1947. File No. CL 10; All India Congress Committee Papers (1946); Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

... Presently, what has been the cause of bitter resentment for the Hindus of Hapur is the imposition of a collective fine of Rs 2,00,000 on the Hapur Hindus alone and its immediate realisation proceedings without allowing a chance to represent the case to higher authorities for review, or proper enquiry....

... This heavy collective fine will be shared either by the Hindu traders' class or the poor labour, who depend on the trade to earn their living. It is an admitted fact that trade in general would never like to be a party to such trouble in the interest of their trade and the imposition

and the collection of fine from them will only penalise them because they are a citizen of a certain locality and a part of the Hindu society at Hapur, who have been constantly in danger of Muslim mob fury any time.

The poor labour class has no money to pay as they are now craving for bread, which is not being made available to them due to no fault to their own.

Under the circumstances the realisation of such a heavy fine will result in the total ruin of the Hapur trade and may bring untold sufferings on the poor....

We are Sir,
Your most obedient People,
Representatives on behalf of Hindus of Hapur,
Madhusudan Dayal, Hazari Lal.

59. The United Provinces Provincial Congress Committee Report on Hapur Riots

Extracts from a report by Phool Singh, MLA, Secretary, United Provinces Congress Committee; 23 January 1947. File No. CL 10; All India Congress Committee Papers (1946); Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

Hapur Riot

Garhmukteswar riot took place on 6th and 7th November 1946 in which many Muslims were killed and their property looted. On the 9th November, 1946, the Muslims of Shahjahanpur and Dasha attacked the Garhmukteswar pilgrims on their way home. The Hindus in their turn retaliated by killing Muslims of Harsaon and Indergarhi on the 10th of the same month. The following table shows the places in Meerut District where riots broke out along with the dates, the number of arrested and released on bail. The table B shows stray cases in Meerut District.

Hapur town is not very [far?] from Garhmukteswar and is on the way to Delhi and the Punjab. The feelings in both the communities ran high and each began to take defensive and offensive measures. The sober minded people of course organised a peace committee as well which held sittings on 11th and 13th December, 1946.... Even before 11th December certain events had happened which necessitated the calling of the meeting on that day....

Between 9th and 11th one Pyare Lal was beaten at Bindi's place—a Muslim Halwai shop. The wife of Manu was also beaten the same day but no report was made.

A *chamar* girl was molested by Rahmat, butcher. A report was lodged but the SO rebuked the father of the girl instead.

On 12th December, 1946, Manohar Lal Lohia Kabari's shop was set on fire.

On 13th December, 1946 some goondas wanted to molest Damodar Dass' daughter.

The same night at 7.45 p.m. Kailash a student got knife wounds on his hands and a lathi blow on his head.

In the meanwhile the bounds for keeping the peace executed by leading citizens in Hapur just after the Garhmukteswar riot were allowed to lapse and no fresh bonds were taken.

The news of Kailash being stabbed spread like wildfire and Hindus collected in large numbers and proceeded on Bulandshahr road. The Congress Committee people who were holding a meeting at that time tried their best to maintain peace. A few Muslims were beaten on the Bulandshahr road. Kishan Ganj is a Hindu mohalla with 4 or 5 Muslim houses. The

Muslims were safely evacuated. The Congress people also informed the District Magistrate on the phone about the gravity of the situation.

On the 14th at 8 a.m. the Muslims attacked a few villagers who were bringing their carts into the city. Similarly Hindus attacked 2 Muslims. But the former incident was not reported in the Thana while the latter was. The police reported that the Hindus started the riot while Algu Rai Shastri's report is to the contrary....

... The Muslims were the aggressor in Gally mohalla and on the cart-men. The Hindus on the Robert Road, Burj Bazar and Kishan Ganj and Garhmukteswar road. Four Muslims were killed, the body of two being burnt in a thatched cottage by the Hindus of a neighbouring village.

Rupees 2 lakhs has been imposed as collective fine on the Hindus including those Congressmen who staked their all to stop the mischief. The villagers were also to pay the fine while those Muslims who started the mischief are left untouched. The local Congress people demand:

Enquiry into the whole affair.

Pending the enquiry the stay of the realisation of fine which should be realised from those found guilty as a result of the enquiry.

Immediate enquiry against the Sub-Inspector Police.

Table A

Place	Date of riot	Number killed whether Hindu or Muslim	Injured	Arrested	
1. Garhmuketswar Fair	6,7	Nov	47 M	25M	80 H
2. Garhmuketswar Town	7	Nov	225 M, 5 H	25H	150 H
3. Shahjahanpur	9	Nov	29 H	26 H	34 M
4. Dasna	9	Nov	50 H	10 H	23 M
5. Harsaon	10	Nov	29 M	10 M	40 H
6. Indargarhi}					
7. Hapur	13, 14, & 16	Nov, Dec.	4 M, 1 H	15M, 5 H	150 H
8. Baghara	22	Dec	2 H	2 H	4M

Table B

	Killed	Injured
1. Bardhana Tehsil Mewana	20	H
2. Shahjahanpur Canal Bridge	1	H
3. Preshat Garh	1	M
5. Ajrara Tehsil Hapur	5	M, 2 H
6. Mussuri	10	H
7. Tori	1	H
8. Sardhana Tehsil Sardhana	5	M, 4 H
9. Pillana Tehsil Baghpat	4	M

The Hindu Relief Committee for the district consists of leading lawyers and other respectable people. The report about the Hapur Relief Committee is awaited.

Phool Singh,
Secretary, UPCC
23rd January 1947.

4.v DELHI

1. Delhi Police Get Ready for Communal Trouble

A note dated 18 April 1946 prepared by W.N.P. Jenkins, Deputy Director, Intelligence Bureau, Home Department, Government of India. File No. 5/6/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Following the exciting speeches made by the Muslim League leaders at the Muslim League Legislators' Convention held in Delhi, communal bitterness has been greatly aggravated by both Hindus and Muslims who are believed to be collecting lathies, swords, hatchets, etc., for offence and defence should the Cabinet Mission fail to solve the Indian political situation. It is therefore suggested that the District Police be prepared to meet any situation which may arise from this embittered feeling.

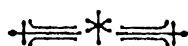
W.N.P. Jenkin.
Deputy Director (C).

2. A Sudden Communal Riot Occurs in Delhi Over a Minor Incident

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Delhi for the first half of May 1946. File No. 18/5/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Communal

Subsequent to the end of the fortnight under report, namely on the evening of the 20th instant, a sudden communal riot occurred in the city as a result of the goat of a Muslim boy straying unto the ground where some Hindu youths were playing games. Two Muslims were killed and seven injured sufficiently to necessitate their treatment in hospital. A few others received minor injuries. The Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh members were apparently those chiefly concerned in the riot on the Hindu side.



3. The Start of the Riot

Extracts from a letter by W. Christie, Chief Commissioner, Delhi, to A. E. Porter, Secretary, Home Department, Government of India; Delhi, 21 May 1946. File No. 5/6/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

*Delhi,
21 May 1946.*

My dear Porter,

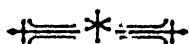
You will have seen in today's paper that there was a sudden communal riot in Delhi last evening, as a result of which two people were killed and six have been admitted to hospital for treatment, two seriously injured. The dead and the injured are all Muslims.

2. The trouble started about 7 p.m. on the Ram Lila Ground close to where Gandhi has been in the habit of holding his evening prayers, and apparently it arose over the goat of a Muslim boy straying onto the ground where some Hindu youths were playing games. This resulted in a dispute, and the Hindus are alleged to have run through Khirki Darwaza to a temple in the mohalla behind the city wall, seized some lathis from there and begun to beat up the Muslims. The police from the Hauz Qazi Police Station were on the spot within about half an hour, and a message was very quickly got to SSP [Senior Superintendent of Police] and DM [District Magistrate], both of whom proceeded to the affected area. The District Magistrate imposed a curfew. I happened to be with the DM when he first received the information, which must have been between 8.30 and 9.00 p.m.

3. *Dawn* has appeared today with scare-mongering headlines that the attack was the work of Rashtriya Swayamsewak Sangh. So far as investigation has gone there is no indication that it was a premeditated attack either by the Hindus in general or the Sangh in particular, but members of the Sangh have been in the habit of exercising in that particular area, and it is possible that some of those who were involved in the initial fight, as also some of those who subsequently joined it are members of the Sangh.

4. At a recent meeting of the editors of Delhi papers it was agreed that in the event of a communal trouble the communities of those killed and injured would not be mentioned and that restraint would be shown in publishing any news regarding communal disturbances. I am having it checked now to find out if *Dawn* was represented at that meeting, but I am inclined to think it was not, which is pity, as today's edition of *Dawn* certainly does not conform with that agreement. I have this morning spoken to the joint editor of *Dawn*, who was at my fortnightly editors meeting, and have told him of the serious consequences which quite likely arise from the way the news of last night's incident has been published in today's edition of *Dawn*, and I have asked him again to try and obtain the cooperation of his paper in controlling communal feelings at a time such as this instead of merely inciting them further.

Yours sincerely,
W. Christie.



4. Local Residents' Version of the Riots

Extracts from a letter from some residents of Circular Road, New Delhi, to the Superintendent of Police, Delhi; New Delhi, 21 May 1946. File No. 5/6/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

*New Delhi,
21.5.1946.*

Sir,

For the past several months some people from the city gather in Ramlila ground early in the morning outside Angoori Darwaza. They parade on the military lines and train themselves in the use of knives, etc., shout slogans, salute the yellow flag and disburse [disperse] after more than an hour. For the last fortnight since the negotiations in Simla began, they have started to gather in the afternoon as well. These grounds are the only open space for the public to come out for a bit of airing and people including quite a large number of women and children, both from the city and New Delhi, come and sit here for some time. Naturally, when people of different tastes and opinion and specially children gather at a place, some mild discussion or argument or even a quarrel among children, are not infrequent. Since these trainees have started coming to these grounds in the evenings also, they deliberately interfere in these harmless and non-serious squabbles and turn them into communal quarrels and disturbances. Other people who come to this place without any thought of quarrel are not prepared for conflict with lathi armed youths bent on making mischief and showing of the result of their training and organisation.

Only yesterday (20-5-1946) a mild argument started between a Hindu and Muslim which as usual was settled after a few minutes. These aggression-inspired military trained young men though not concerned stepped in, started the quarrel afresh and made it a Hindu-Muslim question. Fortunately, for them, there happens to be a structure, which is the seat of vagabond mendicants (this qualification [allegation] can be proved if the CID takes up interest) to which they have given the name of 'temple'. Lathis and other fighting equipment are concealed in this 'temple'. These goondas yesterday took out these lathis from there and attacked the unarmed Mussalmans who happened to be very few in number. Their are eyewitnesses who can prove that the trainees took out the lathis (concealed in wooden boxes) from the 'temple' and attacked the innocent unarmed Muslims. These Muslims seeing the formidable force of these goondas ran towards the city through the Angoori Gate to save their lives and were followed by these goondas. The result is known to all and sundry. Not a scratch was inflicted on any Hindu. If the other party had been a bit equipped, the picture would have been quite different. These Muslims were actually butchered without mercy and from this it can be observed by anybody that these goondas are going beyond limit and also that the authorities are not taking proper action. Both lathis and gandasas [cleavers] were used. The police authorities when they had reached the spot were asked to search the 'temple' to see what material for the purpose of aggression was stocked there but they did not take any action. A Sikh Sub-Inspector (or Inspector) could have the courage to search the mosques in the Minto Road area a few days back to see if lathis were stocked there specially on an occasion when there was no disturbance (nothing having been traced there), the whole of the police guard did not search the 'temple' even when advised and at an occasion when so many Muslims had been murdered by using the material brought out of the 'temple'. Witnesses in this respect are also not lacking. It is feared, the Mussalmans

being the sufferers, the Police will not be able to trace the culprits of cold-blooded murders during daytime, which will really be a cause of shame for the authorities.

These disturbances in the ground are not uncommon. Last year also when these trainees had been doing parade, etc., they created trouble deliberately, took out lathis from the 'temple' and attacked the few Mussalmans who happened to be there....

We are all Government servants here and live with our families. We are away from our houses from about nine in the morning to quite late hours in the evening. All the time we fear that some trouble may not creep up and these goondas who are prepared and ready for it, rather provoke it, may not attack our families. It is apparent that since the recent political negotiations, they have taken a very aggressive and threatening attitude.

It is therefore requested that the visits of these men to these grounds, their training and parading, etc., should be stopped immediately in front of Government quarters, the 'temple' should be searched thoroughly and a sufficient police force be posted in this area, who should be here all the time. A surprise search of the above 'temple' will substantiate the above statement concerning the use made of it by these people, if they have not removed their stock since then due to the inactivity of the authorities. Will Govt look into the matter seriously in order to break up this organisation of goondas.

We want this application to remain anonymous but it is hoped that it will not be ignored on this account and suitable action will be taken without loss of time otherwise it is feared serious consequences will follow by leaving these goondas unbridled....

Yours faithfully,
Residents of Circular Road,
New Delhi.

Copy forwarded for information and necessary action to:

1. The Chief Commissioner, Delhi.
2. The Home Member to the Govt of India, New Delhi.
3. The Deputy Superintendent of Police, Delhi.
4. *Dawn*, Delhi.
5. All India Muslim League, Delhi.
6. Provincial Muslim League, Delhi.

5. Delhi League Demands a Ban on the Sangh

A note dated 3 June 1946 prepared by P.E.S. Finney, Deputy Director (A), Intelligence Bureau, Home Department, Government of India.

File No. 5/6/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Communal Tension

Mr M.A. Jinnah's utterances on the 30th instant at a reception at Davico's in Simla organised by the District Muslim League that "he could not go on quarrelling all the time and hoped to solve the constitutional problem facing India in a friendly and amicable manner and that with this spirit he was going down to Delhi" have had the desired effect on the tense communal atmosphere in Delhi. But as there have been communal riots in Aligarh, Bareilly and Allahabad (UP) and a communal clash in Anguri Ghata, Delhi, too, in which members of the Rashtriya

Swayam Sewak Sangh took prominent part, the local Muslim Leaguers desire a ban on the activities of the Sangh in Delhi.

Mutual distrust still continues. The enforcement of Section 144 CrPC already prohibits the carrying of lathis and other lethal weapons and if the activities of the Sangh are completely banned for a couple of months it would at least discourage the Sangh from giving any cause of provocation to Muslim Leaguers.

P.E.S. Finney.
Deputy Director (A).
3-6-1946.

6. An Assault on a European on Queensway, New Delhi

Report by S.C. Terry, Superintendent of Police, New Delhi, to W.D. Robinson, Senior Superintendent of Police, Delhi; 1 August 1946. File No. 7/14/46; Home (Police) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

At about 6.45 p.m. on 28th July 1946 Mr R.R. Hutter, an employee of the *Hindustan Times*, New Delhi, resident of No. 16, Wengers Flats, New Delhi engaged tonga no 1119 from his house for Feroze Shah Road. While driving along Queensway Road a Sikh was proceeding in the same direction on foot in the middle of the road. The tonga driver asked him to keep to the pavement. The Sikh objected to this and said that he had engaged the tonga. Upon this an altercation ensued and the Sikh pulled Mr Hutter out of the tonga, bit him on the hands and kicked him in the testicles. Some other Indians collected and the Sikh asked them to beat up the foreigner. Only one of them struck Mr Hutter with a stone injuring him on his head. The constable on duty on Queensway arrived at the scene. Mr Hutter went to Scindia House and brought one Mr Cleanson to Parliament Street Police Station where he learnt that a police officer had already left for the scene of the occurrence. Mr Hutter, accompanied by his friend, went to the spot and made a report to the Assistant Sub-Inspector who was present there. The Assistant Sub Inspector asked Mr Hutter to go to the Police Doctor for medical examination, but he said he would get himself examined by the Civil Surgeon. On receipt of the medical report appropriate action will be taken.

S.C. Terry.
Superintendent of Police, New Delhi.

7. Threat of Censorship on the Press and Politicians in Delhi

Letter by W. Christie, Chief Commissioner, Delhi, to A.E. Porter, Secretary, Home Department, Government of India; Delhi, 27 August 1946. File No. 33/25/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Delhi,
27 August 1946.

My dear Porter,

At my conference this morning with the editors of Delhi papers communal situation in the country was discussed at length particularly with reference to Delhi. Unfortunately the editor of *Dawn* did not come to the meeting but the remaining editors were unanimous in agreeing

that fiery and fanatical as well as provocative speeches and writings must be stopped. We discussed the orders which were issued last weekend by the Punjab Government and the similar ones which were recently issued by the UP Government in which a warning was given to the public and to the press that speeches and writings advocating violence or deliberately intended, or which were obviously likely, to stir up communal bitterness would not be allowed in future and those responsible would be firmly dealt with irrespective of position or party to which they may belong. I wish to issue a similar warning so far as Delhi is concerned and I was glad to find that at the editors' meeting this morning there was an unanimous desire that I should do so.

3. Naturally in a matter such as this I wish to be assured that I have the support of the Government of India and that if I follow it up with action—as I shall if my warning is not heeded—I shall be backed and supported by the Government of India and not the reverse.

4. It will be noticed that the warning I wish to issue will apply to all incitement to violence and not only to communal violence. It would therefore apply to speeches by Congress Socialists, Communists and even some Left Wing Congressmen, if in future they repeat some of the incitements to violence which they have made in speeches here in Delhi in the last nine months.

5. I shall be very grateful for the views of the Government of India as quickly as possible because in my opinion there is no other way of controlling *Dawn* in its present attitude of defiance.

Yours sincerely,
W. Christie.

8. Communal Volunteer Organisations Grow Noticeably in Delhi

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Delhi for the first half of September 1946. File No. 18/9/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Communal

The passing off of September 2nd without incident and the inauguration of the negotiations between the Viceroy and Mr Jinnah have slightly eased the communal tension, but there is no doubt that it is still very high, particularly among Government clerks who, of course, form a high proportion of the populace of Delhi. Often educated in communal institutions and unaccustomed to the rough and tumble of less sheltered walks of life, in which members of all communities must inevitably mix freely, their alarm at the prospect of communal strife is pathetic and they seem to have little recreation other than the study of communal politics. Their feelings are accentuated by the inevitable jealousies in matters of promotion, etc., and since they mostly live in specially built quarters, they are scarcely able to get away from this artificial atmosphere.

A potentially dangerous feature of the situation is the growth of communal volunteer organisations, viz., Rashtraya Swayam Sewak Dal, Azad Hind Dal, Congress Sewa Dal and Muslim League National Guards. Although military drill is strictly forbidden, there is no prohibition on physical exercises and in the present situation there has been an increase of enthusiasm in attendance at these functions particularly among the Government clerks whose communal feelings have been noticed above. Political speeches emphasizing the need for self-defence are too frequent and of course encourage these movements, which if this enthusiasm

does not die down or is not suppressed may deteriorate, in big cities at least, into gang warfare and widespread intimidation of peaceful citizens.

9. Paharganj Riots of 7 November

Letter by Mir Musthaq Ahmed, Secretary, New Delhi Congress Committee, to the President, Indian National Congress; New Delhi, 11 November 1946. File No. G-7; All India Congress Committee Papers (1946); Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

*New Delhi,
11th November 1946.*

Dear Sir,

The sad happenings in Paharganj on 7th morning must have come into your knowledge. I was present in Paharganj on 6th and 7th instant. I am enclosing herewith a statement of Lala Deshbandhu Gupta who was present at the scene. As Delhi is centrally administered the inefficiency and incompetency of the police bring the fair name of the Congress into disrepute. The incident of Paharganj on 7th would have been easily avoided if the police had taken precautions knowing full well the situation on 6th November.

In the evening on 6th November a meeting of the local men including Hindus and Muslims was convened in Paharganj Thana to arrive at a settlement regarding the route by which the cow was to be taken on 7th morning. Different proposals and suggestions were made at that meeting without any conclusive agreement. Those who collected there also openly expressed doubts regarding their suggestion being acceptable to the interested parties. However the Thana Incharge announced that any person who wanted to take the cow to slaughterhouse should inform the Thana Incharge before 11 p.m. No intimation was given within this time. Early next morning at 6.30 a.m. a man from the Thana came and brought a chit from the Thanadar for passing a cow from the disputed route. The residents of that locality who were mainly Hindus and Sikhs resented. There was no police picket till a huge crowd had gathered and news had spread all over the Paharganj area of persons of all communities started pouring in. The Congress workers of the area including Lala Deshbandhu Gupta and myself were pacifying the angry crowd. Some representation of the Hindus and Muslim gathered in the Cinema to arrive at a settlement regarding the disputed route. Lala Deshbandhu Gupta told Mr Robinson to give them 15 minutes for this. First Mr Robinson suggested that it be decided by a toss. After great difficulty he was persuaded to give them 15 minutes. Hardly 5 minutes had passed when to the utter surprise of all the cow was taken out by one of the disputed routes and police started using tear gas without announcing it to the persons and started firing and forced persons to disperse.

From the above it would be clear that the local authorities are mostly responsible for the unfortunate happenings in the Paharganj area. The police authorities totally failed to realise the importance of the situation and thus ignored precautionary measures. If the SSP had allowed the parties to arrive at a settlement, every Hindu and Muslim of the locality believes, this would not have happened. The lethargy, incompetence and inefficiency of police authorities resulted in spoiling the cemented relations of the Paharganj residents for the last 40 years. It is the united demand of Hindus and Muslims of the area that an impartial inquiry should be instituted and those found guilty [guilty] of negligence should be punished.

Even after the incident the behavior of the CID officials and the police was discourteous even with those Congress workers who were doing rescue work the whole day. They searched the Congress office. One fails to see the reason behind it. The police made indiscriminate arrests, many of those arrested are innocent persons. This they have done simply to show their achievement.

I draw your attention to the above requesting you to impress upon the central government the need of an enquiry and an exemplary [exemplary] punishment to those found guilty. In case a proper inquiry is not instituted and the hollowness of the Delhi administrative machinery is not exposed I have decided to offer individual satyagraha which may include hunger strike.

Yours faithfully,
Mir Mushtaq Ahmed,
Secretary,
New Delhi Congress Committee.

10. Disturbances in Delhi during *Bakr-Id*

A daily diary of events was prepared by the Home Department, Government of India, based upon police reports received. Extracts below are from the entry for 7 November 1946. File No. 5/44/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Thursday, 7 November 1946

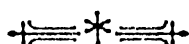
Received information about 11.25 a.m. from the Kotwali that there had been trouble in Paharganj in connection with the taking of a cow to be sacrificed. The police had been injured by brickbats and had to use tear gas and had to open fire about 25/30 rounds fired. Stabbings had begun in that area. Mobile patrol had been put on all over the city and the situation in Paharganj had been brought well under control....

11. Curfew Imposed in Delhi While Troops Stand By

Extracts from a news report, 'Four killed in Delhi clash'. *Hindustan Times*, 8 November 1946.

Four men were killed and over nine injured, three seriously, as a result of a communal clash on Thursday morning in Paharganj, Delhi. Unofficial figures put the number of dead at six and injured at 15. About a dozen men have been arrested. Police parties are patrolling the affected area and troops are standing by. Curfew has been imposed in the Paharganj area between 7 p.m. and 7 a.m. and in the rest of the city between 10.30 p.m. and 5.30 a.m.

The trouble, as on Wednesday, started over the taking of a cow for sacrifice through a Hindu locality....



12. Hordes of Garhmukteshwar Pilgrims Converge on Delhi

A daily diary of events was prepared by the Home Department, Government of India, based upon police reports received. Extracts below are from the entry for 9 November 1946. File No. 5/44/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Saturday, 9 November 1946

News was received about the serious repercussions to the communal rioting at the Garhmuktesar fair. In the evening frantic telephone messages were received that enormous crowds of excited and angry pilgrims were converging on Delhi from the direction of Garhmuktesar. Also that a special train full of dead and injured from a bad attack at Dasna Railway Station was about to arrive in Delhi. Estimates varied about the contents of the train up to a thousand injured. Immediate steps were taken to provide as much hospital accommodation as possible not only in civil Government hospitals, but also in private hospitals and in military hospitals. Eventually it was discovered that the special train contained nine dead bodies, which had been taken off at Ghaziabad, and four injured were brought to Delhi and put into hospital....

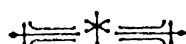
... Wild stories continued to come in of serious rioting in the Meerut district at Garhmuktesar and between Meerut and Garhmuktesar, in Meerut city itself and in the villages to the east of Ghaziabad. These stories had a very inciting effect on the population of the city, but no incident occurred....

13. Aerial Reconnaissance Shows 1,00,000 Pilgrims Heading for Delhi

A daily diary of events was prepared by the Home Department, Government of India, based upon police reports received. Extracts below are from the entry for 10 November 1946. File No. 5/44/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Sunday, 10 November 1946

Reports were received of an aerial reconnaissance which estimated about 1,00,000 people mostly in carts between Ghaziabad and Garhmuktesar heading in the direction of Delhi. Arrangements were made for an elaborate convoy system by the police with the aid of the military to get as many as possible of these people with their carts across the bridge and around Delhi during the night while the curfew was on. These arrangements broke down as a result of the people having been persuaded---it was reported to have been done by some Congressmen at Ghaziabad that they should not move from there as it was all a trick by the Delhi Police to get them into Delhi Province where the men would be arrested and the women handed over to the Muslims. The result was that none of the pilgrims came through that night and our arrangements were all for nothing....



14. What Happened to the Pilgrims?

A daily diary of events was prepared by the Home Department, Government of India, based upon police reports received. Extracts below are from the entry for 12 November 1946. File No. 5/44/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Tuesday, 12 November 1946

What happened to the carts which the aerial reconnaissance reported east of Ghaziabad, I do not know, but nothing like the numbers indicated by the reconnaissance ever reached Delhi and by Tuesday the roads right up to Hapur were comparatively free and the main pilgrim traffic had gone through or disappeared. The day remained peaceful in so far as there were no serious incidents. But many parts of the city were very panicky and just after darkness large numbers of opposing communities began shouting slogans at each other from their houses and housetops and this caused much panic. Wild rumors begun coming in after dusk that serious trouble had broken out in the villages south of Delhi round about Mehrauli and it was reported that large mobs of Muslim villagers were setting fire to Hindu villages. Mobile police patrols were sent out to Mehrauli and beyond on the Gurgaon Road and to Okhla on the Mathura road, as one report said that Okhla Station was about to be attacked. The RAF were also asked to put up a machine for an aerial reconnaissance, if possible to see whether any villages were burning, but they were able to obtain the information from an incoming civil aircraft and only one case of fire was reported up to midnight, namely one house was burning in Badarpur. The information was passed on to the Fire Brigade. These wild rumors proved to be false as there were no attacks on any villages and no large crowds attempting to make any attacks. They had apparently been started by some Hindu on horseback riding round the villages telling the Hindu villagers that these attacks were likely to be made....

15. Saha Nawaz Asks for League-Congress Communal Cooperation

Letter by Shah Nawaz Khan, Major General, Indian National Army, to M.A. Jinnah; New Delhi, 13 November 1946. File No. 58; All India Congress Committee Papers (1946); Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

*New Delhi,
November 13th, 1946.*

Dear Sir,

This is just a short letter to bring to your notice a small incident which impressed me very much and which, I feel, represents the true Islamic spirit on the subject.

On 11th November, hearing of the disturbances and destruction of life and property that were going on in the area between Ghaziabad and Hapur, I visited the area accompanied by Miss Mridula Sarabhai and some other friends. There were some very regrettable and touching scenes into the details of which I shall not go. We went into the villages of Dasna and Myssorie, which were predominantly Muslim with a few Hindu inhabitants. The police tried to prevent us from going there, telling us that if we went there we would be killed. All the same, we went in on our own responsibility. On going into the village we found that the great majority of the Muslims had collected all the Hindus in one place and were giving them full protection. They

had also moved the Hindu women, together with their own womenfolk, to places of safety. I talked to one of them who said that in spite of the ruthless destruction of their lives and property in all the area around, they were going to protect the lives, honor and property of the minority amongst them, because these were the instructions from the Qaed-e-Azam, and also because this was the true spirit of Islam. Miss Mridula Sarabhai and I.I. Jaganath of the INA, were moved to tears by this. Both of them congratulated the villagers.

In some predominantly Hindu villages we also witnessed similar cooperation between the two communities.

The local Muslim population said that they knew that the barbarities were not committed by the local people, but by pilgrims from outside, mainly from Rohtak and Hussar, incited by the RSS and other communalists. Even Miss Mridula Sarabhai when trying to bring home the futility of such senseless destruction of life and property, was insulted by them.

My own impression is that rank communalists and hooligans are trying to incite the Muslims in the name of the Muslim League, and the Hindu Mahasabha and the RSS are trying to incite the Hindus in the name of the Congress.

I would request you to issue frequent appeals and send Muslim League workers into the areas predominantly Muslim to take the responsibility of protecting the life, honor and property of the minority. I am also making a similar appeal to the Congress to send prominent workers to areas that are predominantly Hindu, to take the responsibility of protecting the lives, honor and property of the Muslim minority.

I also suggest that a closer liaison between the workers of Muslim League and the Congress should be established with a view to maintaining closer contact and to countering the destructive force that are working in the name of the Muslim League and the Congress.

Yours sincerely,
Shah Nawaz Khan,
Major General, INA

16. Police Opens Fire to Quell a Spate of Fresh Rioting in Delhi

A daily diary of events was prepared by the Home Department, Government of India, based upon police reports received. Extracts below are from the entry for 13 November 1946. File No. 5/44/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Wednesday, 13 November 1946

The alarm and panic caused by shouting of slogans last night had its result in serious clashes in Pahari Dhiraj, Bahadurgarh Road this morning. Opposing gangs with lathis and those who were brickbatting had to be dispersed by the police and a company of troops called into the area. A house was also set on fire but the inmates were rescued. The situation was brought under control and there was no further specific incident in that area during the day. There was another clash near Ahata Kidara in the afternoon, when the police had to disperse the mobs again.

The total casualties, including one man found stabbed to death on the railway line beyond Sarai Rohilla Railway Station, were 10 deaths and over 20 injured, most of whom were hospital cases, some serious....

The police had to disperse riotous mobs in Kashmere Gate, Faiz Bazaar cum Daryaganj and in the centre of the city. There were various occasions during the day and evening in which police had to open fire and gas had to be used to disperse the mobs in the evening....

17. After Ten Days of Communal Disturbances Peace Returns to Delhi

Article, 'Peace committees in Delhi', by Y.D. Sharma. *People's Age*, 24 November 1946.

The situation in Delhi after ten days of communal rioting, is slowly returning to normal.

These ten days have seen all sections of the people, belonging to all parties, rallying to fight against the riots. It is their efforts—the efforts of Congressmen, Leaguers, Communists, of workers, students, women, citizens—which are bringing Delhi back to sanity.

Here is the story of Delhi's war on the Riot Demon.

From the very beginning, the Delhi Communist Party threw its entire strength into the campaign to stop the communal riots and restore peace and harmony.

The very next day after riots began, thousands of handbills and 500 posters were issued by the Communist Party appealing to the Hindus and Muslims to stop the fratricidal war, which strengthens our common British enslavers.

Communists' Appeal

They appealed to the people to follow the instructions of the foremost leaders of the Congress and League to maintain peace.

Thousands of citizens read and praised the prompt appeal issued by the Communist Party and it had an excellent effect on the city.

The next day was Guru Nanak's birthday. A procession of Sikhs passed off peacefully and there were scenes of communal fraternisation en route.

On Sunday came news of rioting at the Garhmukteswar Fair and attacks on trains carrying pilgrims. Wild rumors floated in Delhi and tension grew higher.

The Provincial Congress and League organisation remained inactive at first. The Communist Party issued another poster and a public appeal through the press to the local Congress and League leaders to fight actively for peace and set up a joint peace committee.

Communists also personally contacted many Congress and League leaders towards the same end.

Thanks to the efforts of certain progressive Congressmen and Leaguers, such a joint peace committee was set up on Tuesday, November 12.

Since then the Committee has campaigned for peace and communal harmony. Its volunteers have been patrolling the streets in lorries, decorated with Congress and League flags. They have also visited some rural areas of Delhi Province, where the return of pilgrims from the Garhmukteswar Fair had created some tension.

The Communist Party has pledged its fullest support to the Joint Peace Committee and has appealed to the people to form similar peace committees in every ward and mohalla of the city.

Communist Party members and sympathisers have taken the initiative in dozens of mohallas to form joint peace committees.

In Daryagunj ward where the Party Commune is situated a Ward Peace Committee has been formed. These peace committees have done very good work in fighting panic and restoring confidence and peace.

Women and Students

The movement for joint peace committees has become fairly widespread. A women's peace committee was formed on November 16, consisting of representatives of the Delhi Women's League and Muslim Women's League.

The Delhi Provincial Students' Federation observed Communal Unity Day on November.

16 students' squads carried on propaganda in the city for peace and communal harmony and collected funds for relief in Bengal and Bihar. Out of their efforts has emerged a joint peace committee of students consisting of the representatives of the Students' Federation and the Students' Congress. The Muslim Students' Federation is expected to join this committee soon.

Throughout this period, the organised working-class has stood solidly against this fratricidal war. Wherever the Red flag has been planted, communal propaganda has not succeeded. While the Communist Party has been busy fighting the flames of communal unions in the city, the trade unions have been guarding the unity of Hindu and Muslim workers.

Thirteen trade unions of Delhi issued an appeal through posters, calling upon workers to fight against the communal riots, rumors and panic, and help in maintaining brotherly peace and unity wherever they live.

Workers United

This appeal declared that any worker participating in communal strife is an enemy of the working-class and will be expelled from the union.

Railway workers, both Hindus and Muslims, maintained perfect unity in all their colonies even in those, which are in the midst of the affected areas.

Hindu and Muslim tramway workers have mutually defended one another.

Nearly 500 workers of both communities working in the Central Electric Power House have lived together in common *bastis* without the slightest tension.

Heroic Defence

Some municipal quarters are situated in one of the worst affected areas of the city. Crowds of one community gathered to attack the workers of the other community, living there.

Najmuddin, President of the Delhi Municipal Workers' Union, who lived there, stood against the hostile crowd and told them that they would have to kill him first before they could touch his brother workers.

The crowd turned back and later the threatened workers were evacuated to a safer locality.

Abdullah, Secretary of the Hosiery Workers' Union, saved several Hindu shops in Sadar Bazar area from being looted.

Trade unions also helped in maintaining the essential services and fought for the demands of workers arising out of the riot situation.

The Postal Union has secured the suspension of evening delivery of mail, but have bravely maintained morning and noon deliveries.



18. Riot Situation in Delhi

Telegram by the Governor General, Home Department, Government of India, to the Secretary of State for India, London; 29 November 1946. File No. 5/44/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

In Delhi city where situation had been tense owing to reports of Eastern Bangal and Bihar disturbances, communal rioting broke out on 7th during *Id* celebration and police had to open fire to disperse mobs. Stray cases of stabbing also occurred. On 11th pilgrims returning from Garhmukteshwar fair and riot-affected areas in the United Provinces passed through Delhi and contributed to increased alarm which was further intensified by news of trouble at Rohtak in Punjab on 13th. Stabbing and spasmodic clashes continued till 15th but thereafter tension eased. Total casualties from 7th to 15th were 27 killed and 55 injured. During disturbances police on several occasions had to use tear smoke and firing to disperse crowds but no fatal casualties were thereby caused. Military stood by throughout and materially assisted in restoring confidence and escorting pilgrims returning to Punjab districts. Since 15th there has been no recrudescence of trouble.

4.vi PUNJAB

1. Punjab Muslims Regard Congress-Akali-Unionist Coalition as 'Hindu Rule'

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for the Punjab for the first half of March 1946. File No. 18/3/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Political

The main agitation of the fortnight has ... arisen out of the Muslim indignation over the formation of a Congress-Akali-Unionist Ministry which the great majority of Muslims regard as the unjustifiable establishment of Hindu rule in a Muslim majority Province and an indication that the British Government intend to ignore the Pakistan issue in the hope of arriving at a settlement with Congress. Hindus and Sikhs are naturally well pleased with the Ministry and communal dissensions are consequently being sharply accentuated and are likely to become more strained during the next few weeks.

... Muslim repercussions to the formation of the Coalition Ministry were strongly marked. *Hartals* were observed throughout the Province on March the 7th and again on the 9th which was celebrated as Traitors' Day; demonstrations and protest meetings were also held. Agitation was particularly pronounced in Lahore where very large and representative meetings were held on the 6th and 7th when speakers asserted that the Coalition Ministry was merely a device to cheat the Muslims of their legitimate rights, advocated the boycott of Hindu shops and urged the strengthening of the League National Guard. There were also noisy and abusive demonstrations by Muslim students outside the Premier's house. On March the 9th a students' procession armed with sticks and other weapons set out to demonstrate outside the Premier's houses, but on the way came into conflict with Hindu students of the Sanatan Dharam College. Slogans led to an interchange of brickbats and the road in front of the College was soon strewn with rubble and bricks. Eventually the Inspector in charge of a small Police party present had

to open fire to restore the situation which had rapidly passed out of control. Five shots in all were fired and two persons were injured, neither seriously. The total casualties from all causes were 11, one of whom, a Muslim, died later from head injuries caused by a brickbat. Later in the day Muslim students demonstrated in front of the Premier's house and in other suburban parts of Lahore. Again on March 10th a Muslim League meeting attended by some 70,000 people was held at Lahore when the Coalition Ministry was vigorously attacked and the audience was incited to be prepared to make any sacrifice for Pakistan. The tone of the speeches was strongly communal. Although for the present the League has no intention of forcing a clash with the Government, the speeches of its leaders are inevitably creating an atmosphere likely to disturb the communal harmony of the Province.

2. Akalis Join Up with Congress Over Vexed Question of Pakistan

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for the Punjab for the first half of March 1946. File No. 18/3/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Political

... The failure to evolve a formula suitable to the Akalis and the League on the vexed question of Pakistan has resulted in the Panthic *bloc* joining the Congress and the Coalition Ministry. The Congress opposition of the elections has, however, not been forgotten and Akali leaders, Master Tara Singh and Giani Kartar Singh in particular, have openly expressed the view that the Congress is a Hindu organisation which cannot be trusted to support Sikh interests....

The demand for a separate Sikh State is growing in strength. The proposal has been expressed at a number of recent Akali meetings, generally well attended, and was discussed by the Working Committee of the SA [Shiromani Akali] Dal which decided to invite the view of all Sikh organizations. A resolution demanding an Azad Sikh State was adopted at a general meeting of the SGPC [Shiromani Gurudwara Prabandhak Committee] on the 9th March.

3. Tense Communal Relations in Lahore and Amritsar

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for the Punjab for the first half of March 1946. File No. 18/3/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Communal

Communal relations are badly strained in many places and particularly so in Lahore where only Police vigilance has prevented an outbreak. On 12th March some Sanatan Dharam College students attacked and stoned Muslims driving cattle for slaughter past the College. Muslim butchers quickly collected and Hindu students from another College began to assemble when the Police arrived and dispersed the mob. In consequence of the general deterioration in the communal situation the District Magistrate Lahore has issued orders under Section 144 CrPC prohibiting for a period of 21 days within the limits of the Corporation of the City of Lahore the carrying of weapons, public meetings, the gathering in any public place of five or more persons and public demonstrations of a communal nature.

On March the 15th a communal riot occurred in Amritsar. Two water carts were returning from a temple after taking part in the *holi* celebrations when difficulty arose over their passing through a gateway erected for a licensed Muslim anniversary procession. In the course of the riot nine Hindus were injured, two of whom have subsequently died, and seven Muslims were injured. Later in the day the procession become unruly and had to be dispersed by a Police *lathi* charge. After the procession had been dispersed it was found that one Sikh had been killed and two Hindus and two Muslims injured in communal clashes. One constable was seriously injured by brickbats. A curfew order has been imposed under Section 144 CrPC and also an order forbidding processions and gatherings of five or more persons and the carrying of arms.

4. Punjab Communal Situation Gives Rise to Renewed Hindu Interest in the Rashtriya Swayamsewak Sangh

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for the Punjab for the second half of March 1946. File No. 18/3/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Volunteer Organizations

One result of the recent communal riots has been a revival of interest among Hindu youths in the Rastriya Swayam Sewak Sangh. There are indications that the RSSS is seriously disturbed by the communal and political situation in the country, and it is reported from the Rawalpindi Division that RSSS workers have begun propaganda to organise Hindus for the defence of their community in the event of a civil war. Hindu youths are reported to be joining the organisation in numbers in the Ambala area, and an approach to Hindu students has been reported in Colleges in Lahore following the communal riot outside the Sanatan Dharam College. In Amritsar the Sangh has figured in all recent communal incidents.

Communal

Communal relations are still very strained in many places. Outwardly conditions in Amritsar have returned to normal, but fear persists on both sides and the Hindus are resentful. On March the 18th there was an offshoot of the Amritsar riot at Jandiala, a big village some 15 miles from Amritsar, where a minor communal riot took place in which one Muslim was killed and eight injured. In retaliation the Muslims set fire to and looted several Hindu shops before order was restored. A minor communal clash arising out of a quarrel between a Hindu and Muslim shopkeeper occurred in the Ambala cantonment on March the 23rd. An interchange of brickbats resulted in 10 Muslims and two Hindus being injured, none seriously. There have also been stray assaults in Multan where communal tension is reported to be acute.

5. League Launches Extra Parliamentary Offensive Against Coalition

Extracts from an article, 'Anti-Glancy-Khizar demonstration provoked into Hindu-Muslim clash'. *People's Age*, 6 October 1946.

Behind the political intrigues going on in the Punjab for the making and the unmaking of the Ministry, the rumbling voice of Hindu-Muslim suspicion and hate can be heard among the wide masses of the people.

When from Calcutta, Bombay, Delhi rose the battle cry, "Hindu-Muslim Bhai Bhai", and martyrs gave their lives battling unitedly against the British raj—in Lahore brickbats were thrown not against the Police and the Military but by one Punjabi against another.

Lahore highlights the dark alternative to the glory of Calcutta, Bombay, and Delhi, which faces the country.

On the 5th of March the Congress-Akali-Unionist Coalition was formed. By this one act patriotic Punjab was sharply split into two. On the 6th the Provincial League called a hartal to protest against the formation of the Coalition.

At a meeting of over twenty thousand Muslims that evening, the League leaders called for action if the Governor, flouting the League's claim that it had a majority in the Legislature, called upon Khizar to form the Ministry. Nawabzada Liaquat Ali, relating the story of political negotiations, spoke of a "a tooth for a tooth" as the reply of the Muslims to the Coalition....

League Decides on Hartal

... The decision was taken to call a Province wide hartal on the 9th. The League leaders, the Nawab of Mamdot, Mian Mumtaz Daultara and Mian Iftikharuddin are reported to have emphasised categorically that the demonstration should under no circumstances be against the Hindus and Sikhs, but only against Governor Glancy and Khizar.

But who could control the communal press? The Hindu papers worked up a regular scare. The Muslim papers quoted the provocative and threatening portions of the speeches at League meeting. An atmosphere of hate and panic was sought to be created, despite the best efforts of the progressive section among the League leaders.

The Punjab government brought out an insolent press note appealing to the leaders not to indulge in communal talks and warning all that there was a ban on processions in the Province, which the Government intended to enforce. Nothing could have been more provocative—and if it was the intention of the Government to provoke Leaguers into taking out a procession they could not have done better.

After giving the call for hartal on the 9th, the League leaders more or less left the hartal to take its own course, while they busied themselves with intrigues to win over individual opportunist MLA's in order to secure a majority in the Legislature....

Anti-British Demonstration Turns into Communal Clash

... On the morning of the 9th Muslim students were holding a meeting in the Gol Bagh, after taking a procession through the main thoroughfares from the Islamia College. The speeches and slogans were directed straight at the Governor, at the British and Khizar and his bunch of toadies.

Following the meeting, the students decided to march to Khizar's house and demonstrate there. The procession was stopped at the Secretariat by the Police, but the students rushed and reorganised the ranks a little further ahead.

They then came past the Sanatan Dharam College. They were still shouting anti-Glancy and anti-Khizar slogans. Suddenly the clash began. It seems that somebody threw brickbats at the procession and this was the signal for trouble.

Days of tension had allowed certain boys of the communal Rashtra Seva Sangh to create an atmosphere of panic in the college and the rumor had been circulated that Muslims would attack. It was this inflammable atmosphere inside the college and the boiling spirit inside the procession which were set alight by the throwing of bricks by certain mischief mongers.

For half an hour, brickbats were exchanged. The Police kept watching calmly. In fact, it is alleged that Policemen were deliberately encouraging the students to fight. In the crowd were CID men who were spreading poisonous hatred. A whole lorry load of them were seen in the vicinity shortly before the whole business began.

One Muslim student who was in the procession confidently asserts that he saw a CID man throw a brick at the Sanatan Dharam College Laboratory.

The Communist students Kameshwar, Shameem and others of the Sanatan Dharam College with the help of other students were battling all the time at the gates of the college preventing the boys from rushing out at the Leaguers. On the other side Communists Hardev Singh, Surjit Singh and Shaukat, who had reached the spot were helping the MSF [Muslim Students' Federation] leaders, at grave risk to themselves to control the Muslim boys.

Police Open Fire

Suddenly, a Hindu Police Inspector was hit on the eye. He lost his temper and without warning ordered one constable to fire at the college boys, who threw the missile. Five shots rang out. Two boys were seriously injured.

Only then did the Police advance and take up their positions between the warring groups—after a large number had been injured. But the situation remained tense. Boys on both sides armed themselves with lathis, hockey sticks—Muslim students uprooted some iron fencing and prepared to crash through the Police. Nothing would induce either the processionists to march on, or the college boys to leave their gates and rooftops and go back to their rooms.

Iftikharuddin Saves Situation

The League leaders, hearing of the clash, rushed to the scene. Mian Iftikharuddin himself led the Muslim boys away despite the efforts of provocateurs, who resisted his efforts. Near the Sohan Lal College, the provocateurs tried again to stir up trouble by throwing a few stones, but they were stopped and severely castigated by the crowd. Mian Sahib then spoke: "Our fight is not against the Hindus and Sikhs, but against the British. If we fall a prey to the CID men who are undoubtedly amongst you and resort to communal trouble, we are playing the game of Glancy and the Imperialists who want to keep us divided."

Mian Sahib then asked for all 'weapons'—sticks and fencing, etc.,—to be handed in to him. Then he asked the audience to shout only the slogans he gave, which were:

Glancy Ko Nikal Do (Turn Glancy out);
Traitors Of The Nation—Resign;
Hindu Muslim Unity—Zindabad;
British Imperialism—Barbad Ho.

And it was with these slogans ringing that the procession marched to Khizar's house, demonstrated there and then went on, increasing in numbers, to Ichhra, some three miles further, where lives Rafiq (the MIA elected from Lahore on the League ticket, who had announced his resignation from the League that day).

"Hindu-Muslim Unity Zindabad"

It was an unforgettable procession. The Police armed with rifles and lathis and tear gas went past the procession time and again. Every time they passed by, the processionists shouted anti-British slogans. They jeered at British Sahibs when they passed....

On the way back the crowd was leaderless. Certain disruptive elements strove to create trouble. They tried to stone a shop which had a signboard with the words "Jai Hind" on it, but they were prevented by a number of Muslim boys who themselves stood between the stone throwers and the shop.

Similar attempts on the way back to start the looting of non-Muslim hawkers were quashed by the good sense of the majority in the procession.

Gradually what was left was a group shouting nothing more than meaningless nonpolitical slogans about Khizar Hayat. Outside the Premier's house they indulged in a ceremony of mock-mourning—this against the previous express instructions of their leaders who strongly disapproved of this form of demonstration. Anyhow, the procession, now completely irresponsible, gradually frittered away.

Spontaneous groups roamed about shouting slogans throughout the day, but nothing in the nature of a communal clash occurred. The next morning the funeral ceremony of a Muslim student who had died as a result of injuries in the clash, was held—attended by a vast gathering of Muslims estimated to be over thirty thousand. Despite the very great feeling for the dead boy, the huge crowd was kept in discipline by the League leaders and no clash was allowed to take place....

6. Communal Feelings and Politics Mix Up Dangerously in the Punjab

Extracts from Fortnight Report for the Punjab for the second half of April 1946. File No. 18/4/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Political

With the extension of Section 144 order in Lahore and Amritsar there has been no actual outbreak of serious trouble and outwardly peace prevails. The situation however cannot be called either pleasant or good, and all reports stress growing suspense and uncertainly, with communal feeling and politics inextricably mixed and gravely threatening. Communal clashes in Amritsar, Jullundur and Hissar were only prevented from spreading by prompt official intervention, and hardly a day passes when the Police do not have to damp down some local incident which, if not dealt with promptly and firmly, would set alight the blaze. Large scale communal rioting, in towns chiefly, is everywhere taken for granted in the near future, and all parties are equipping themselves with lathis and knives. So far the only programme behind these moves seems to be to prepare for the worst, and it is doubtful whether in the existing mood anything more elaborate in the nature of organisation or timetable is required for trouble to start.

Communal

There have been communal clashes during the fortnight at Kartarpur in Jullundur district, Hissar and Amritsar. In the former case a Hindu sweet [s] seller resented a Muslim youth touching his sweets, resulting in a fight which ended in one Muslim being stabbed and six Hindus injured. In Hissar a fight between Muslim butchers and *Mahajans* resulted in injuries to 20 Hindus, 5 Muslims and 2 Constables, the Hindu injuries largely resulting from gunshot wounds caused by a local Muslim arms dealer who joined in. In Amritsar communal tension

continues to worsen and two fresh cases of stabbing have been reported, one being the stabbing in the court compound of a Hindu witness in the case arising out of the recent communal riot. In all three districts Section 144 is in force and the situation is under control, but in Amritsar the position is very tense, with what is described as a race to collect sticks, knives and any other weapons available.

Various districts have reported minor incidents of quarrels between Hindus and Muslims all showing the bitter feelings which prevail. In several of these cases Rashtriya Swayam Sewak Sangh volunteers on the one hand and Muslim League supporters on the other lined up, but were prevented from joining in by the presence of Police on the spot.

7. Curfew Extended in Lahore and Amritsar for Another Month

Extracts from Fortnightly report for the Punjab for the first half of May 1946. File No. 18/3/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Political

There has been no outward change in the situation since the last report. General uneasiness prevails in practically all districts, alongside a growing tendency for all three communities to organise and to equip themselves in preparation for what is openly and challengingly called civil war....

... Muslim League activity has continued to concentrate on speeches and propaganda; with an unfortunate tendency on the part of Muslim religious divines to exploit their position in places of worship by indulging in frankly political outbursts. Reorganisation of the League National Guards is progressing according to the League's open programme, but at less than the advertised rate. In Lahore and Rawalpindi Khaksars have recently been showing signs of renewed truculence, evidently under the impression that wartime restrictions had lapsed. This unjustified assumption led to the arrest of ten Khaksars in Rawalpindi for carrying spades and taking out an unauthorised procession. Both membership and organised drilling on the part of the Rashtriya Swayam Sewak Sangh has increased throughout the Province, especially in predominantly Muslim areas where no such movement was previously thought necessary....

Communal

Communal tension is acute throughout the province. Multan city where feeling has been simmering for some time past, was threatened with a serious situation at the beginning of the month, following stabbing cases involving the death of two Muslims and two Hindus. Intensive Police patrolling combined with a curfew order has prevented any actual communal riot from developing, and although nervousness remains and normal conditions are not yet fully restored, the situation is under control.

The atmosphere in Amritsar remains tense but has improved during the fortnight following the enforcement of the communal riot scheme coupled with a curfew order. The Sikhs have fortunately taken no part, and both in Amritsar and elsewhere communal harmony committees have been set up and these have met with some success. The situation in Hissar is still unsettled, both communities remaining very suspicious of one another, and Hindu shopkeepers staged a hartal in protest against the arrests of Hindus in last month's riot. They reopened their shops when threatened with proceedings under the Defence of India rules for refusing to supply

essential commodities. A report just received indicates renewed assaults by the two communities on each other's womenfolk, necessitating imposition of curfew orders and certain arrests. Section 144 orders are being extended by Government in Amritsar and Lahore for another month.

8. An Uncertain Lull in Communal Tensions in the Punjab

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for the Punjab for the first half of June 1946. File No. 18/6/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Communal

While there have been incidents during the period of this report which might well have developed dangerously if they had lacked immediate attention, the communal situation has been less disturbed than it would have been reasonable to expect in the circumstances which obtain. Indeed, in some areas a welcome relaxation in communal tension has been noticed. This improvement has been ascribed partly to preventive action, partly to the publication of Government's determination to deal strictly with offenders, and partly to the lull in political activity which has attended the negotiations which are going on. That it is also due to the fear of the communities themselves of the serious dimensions communal disturbance quickly assume is undoubted, and one of the ingredients of the public wish for a settlement is that thereby communal strife will be avoided. The communal situation, however, is not normal though it may have improved, and the apprehension that it would quickly worsen should disagreement attend the Cabinet Mission's endeavors is too well justified to be lightly cast aside.

9. Marked Increase in Membership and Activities of the Sangh and Muslim League National Guards

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for the Punjab for the first half of July 1946. File No. 18/7/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Communal

The communal position has remained unchanged and has not been unduly affected by the communal disturbances which have taken place in Bengal and in other parts of India. One of the most ominous features of the situation is the marked increase in the activity both of the Rashtriya Swayam Sewak Sangh and of the Muslim League National Guards. The membership of the Sangh is believed to have doubled since November of last year, and is now over twenty eight thousand. Although the Sangh clothes itself in considerable secrecy, Hindu militancy is its creed and in recent months its members have been involved in communal affrays in which murders were committed. Some branches of the Sangh are known to be armed with dangerous weapons and training is being carried out constantly and quietly. The strength of the Muslim League National Guards has risen from three thousand at the end of last year to over ten. The announced aim is to increase the number of Guards to half a million in the remaining months of this year. So far training has been largely absent, but an effort is now being made to remedy this and recently persons selected from various places have been taught at Lahore to act as instructors. Both of these volunteer organisations have branches in most districts and in many

villages. They are thus trouble-spreading agencies and for this reason and others which are obvious are potentially very dangerous.

10. Punjab's Atmosphere Charged with "Muslim Hatred and Hindu Panic"

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for the Punjab for the first half of September 1946. File No. 18/9/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Communal

Helped by control orders under Section 144 of the Criminal Procedure Code, which have been issued in all the districts of the Province, the 2nd of September, the day on which the Congress leaders and their nominees took office, passed without serious incident, as *Id* had done. Muslims greeted the occasion with sullen black flags and Hindus with apprehensive joy. Since then, despite incidents of some seriousness in Multan and Jullundur, tension has subsided in a noticeable degree. Unfortunately the easing there has been cannot be ascribed to any real improvement in Hindu-Muslim relations, but to the fact that a pitch of intensity had been reached which could not be maintained indefinitely and had either to break out into violence and disorder or diminish. Although the situation is better than it was, the atmosphere remain supercharged with Muslim hatred and Hindu panic. In the circumstances danger lurks round every corner and will be enhanced if Muslims forsake the restraint they have so far displayed in a remarkable degree. There is no doubt that Muslim good conduct is due to the community's blind faith in Mr Jinnah and in so far as it has tended to prevent sporadic outbursts of violence the discipline is commendable. As an indication of the formidable proportions mass movement launched with Jinnah's approval would be likely to assume, the same control is not a matter which furnishes much reassurance.

11. League's Preparations for Future Hold Chilling Prospects

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for the Punjab for the second half of September 1946. File No. 18/4/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Political

... The Muslim League in particular is furnishing no assurance of any belief in the efficacy of talk at this stage, and in a mood of sullen resentment is continuing its preparations for a campaign of action. Propaganda has been intensified and it has been reported that both in towns and villages the results flowing from it are dangerously effective. At the same time there is a drive for increased recruitment to the Muslim League National Guards and for the raising of funds. There is also a movement which is gaining ground for the boycott of Hindus and their trade and goods. All this is being done directly or at the instance of the Provincial League Command which has recently issued circulars exhorting all Muslims to be ready for action. The League's executive is now in fairly frequent session and recently two important conferences took place which were attended by Khwaja Nazimuddin, the ex-Premier of Bengal, who is accepted as occupying a privileged place in Mr Jinnah's confidence. Presidents and Secretaries of the

League's district and town branches attended one of the meetings and both considered the present situation and future action. Available information regarding the deliberations of both meetings justifies little confidence being entertained about the future's peace, for it says that the League is determined on action and has little hope that it will be avoided, that its action will be widespread and will involve the villages and possibly the Services, that there is little likelihood of it remaining noncommunal and nonviolent and that it will have religious cover and inspiration. In pursuance of the League's plans District Committees of Action are to be set up and a conference of *Ulemas* and *Pirs* is to be arranged which will take place in Lahore, if the Punjab League Leaders have their way. It is expected it will grant a *fatwa* in favour of *Jihad* and will declare that all who take part in it will do a holy act. The arrangements for the conference are to be made, and dates are to be arranged, in consultation with the Jamait-ul-Ulema-i-Islam and it is unlikely that it will be long delayed.

12. First of the Dashehra Processions Causes Clashes in Hansi

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for the Punjab for the second half of September 1946. File No. 18/9/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Communal

A communal clash occurred in Hansi, in the Hissar district, on the 28th of September. The occasion was provided by the first of the Dussehra processions and the immediate cause of the trouble was an incident involving a Muslim boy and a Hindu boy. One person was killed and twenty five were injured; considerable tension resulted....

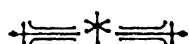
13. Communal Situation in Rohtak District

Extracts from Paragraphs for Monthly Summary for the Cabinet; 15 December 1946. File No. 5/12/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Punjab (First and Second Halves of November)

The riots in Rohtak district ... continued until the 17th November when Hindu Jats clashed with a party of Ods, who are a wandering Muslim tribe. The number of persons killed during the disturbance is now believed to be 23 but this figure may be increased when the fate of certain missing people is known. Altogether over 400 persons have been arrested and this action combined with the locaoun of additional police has improved the situation, although it has not removed communal tension in a degree which constitutes a guarantee for continued peace.

In other districts of Rohtak division tension is also great but a great deal of good has been done with the military's cooperation which enabled the army to be seen in disturbed areas.



14. A Response to the Cabinet Mission Plan

Extracts from a letter by Sewa Singh to Tara Singh, an Akali leader; Lahore, 24 December 1946. File No. G-17; All India Congress Committee Papers (1946); Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

Lahore,
24-12-46.

Dear Master Tara Singh,

British Government has created conditions adverse to the Sikhs and the Congress, but it is up to everyone to think clearly, consult every possible source, and decide promptly. Congress is under a great strain, but she is doing her best. However, I think it is high time for the Sikh community to declare through you the nature of your conditions to join the B group. In my opinion, the following should be reasonable:

To partition Punjab into East and West Punjab Provinces so that East Punjab may have a Government helpful to everyone especially the Sikhs and Hindus. I do not think it carries any weight to say that whole Punjab is our homeland. It is better to be definite and stick to that demand....

Same should be done in case of Bengal where West Bengal Province with Hindu majority will cooperate in the C group on the same conditions given above....

Yours sincerely,
Sewa Singh,
24/12.

4.vii MADRAS

1. Attempts at Conversion of Scheduled Castes to Islam in Madurai

Extracts from a letter by K. Sivanandy Devar, General Secretary, Tamilnad Hindu Mahasabha, Madura, to Ashutosh Lahiri, General Secretary, All India Hindu Mahasabha, New Delhi; Madura, 8 June 1946. File No P-71; All India Hindu Mahasabha Papers (1946); Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

Madura,
8-6-46.

Sir,

... Let me state that with the help of a large amount of money sent from the north the Muslims made a great attempt at conversion of about thirty thousand people of the depressed classes. I carried on my propaganda against it. Feelings ran high with the result that a Hindu was murdered by the Muslims. As the result of this the Hindus got angry, looted fourteen Muslim shops, caused damage of nearly four lakhs, beat and insulted the men and women of the Muslim community in a manner which their fanaticism deserved. Cases are going on in the courts for murder against the Muslims and looting against the Hindus.

On 12-5-46 the Blackshirt troops of Mr E.V. Ramaswamy Naicker, the leader of the Self Respect Party and the Dravidistan (supporter of Pakistan) entered the Meenakshi Temple of

Madura insulted the devotees, men and women and spoke and committed many acts of sacrilege. Suits in this connection have been launched in the Court....

Yours faithfully,
K. Sivanandy Devar.

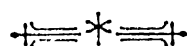
2. A Hartal in Madurai Degenerates into Communal Conflict

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Madras Province for the second half of June 1946. File No. 18/6/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Law and Order

Serious disturbance broke out in Madura on 21st June in connection with hartal for Pandit Nehru's arrest and continued on 22nd and 23rd. The disorders unfortunately took on a Hindu-Muslim aspect as some Muslim did not close their shops resulting in the shops being stoned and looted. This led to retaliation and mutual assaults and case of stabbing. The disturbances also had a 'labour' aspect, there being clashes between two opposing parties of the mill workers of the Madura mills, one party with allegiance to the Madura Labour Union and the other under the influence of the Communists. Attempts were made to block roads with large stones, dustbins and with uprooted telephone posts. The police at first used tear gas but the police party itself was attacked with stones and had to open fire repeatedly. The total casualties on account of police firing during the three days were four killed, 2 died of wounds and 2 seriously injured. In addition 6 persons were murdered and 45 injured in the mob fighting. A number of persons have been arrested. Orders under Section 144 CrPC were passed and a curfew was also imposed. The presences of the Hon'ble Minister for Industries and Labour in the city on June 23rd helped to ease the situation. Peace Committees composed of members of both communities were formed at the instance of the Collector and went round the town to assist in the restoration of peace. By the 24th, the city returned to normal conditions.

A village in Salem district was the scene of lawlessness on the 13th June. There was long-standing enmity between the Hindus and Muslims of the place arising out of the proximity of Hindu and Muslim places of worship on a piece Government land. In revenge for an assault on some Hindus by the Mohaminadans the previous day, the Hindu of the village assisted by a large number of rowdies from the surrounding villages ran amuck and looted several Muslim shops and set fire to the *makhan* [building] in which the objects of Muharram worship had been kept. A large number of Hindus have been arrested, in this connection and investigation is proceeding.



3. Communal Troubles in Vaniyambadi, North Arcot

Extracts from an express letter by Public (General) Department, Government of Madras, to Intelligence Bureau, Home Department, Government of India; Fort St George, 29 July 1946. File No. 5/29/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

*Fort St George,
29th July 1946.*

Following dispute over route to be taken by *Kavadi* (Hindu religious) processions, rioting took place between Hindus and Muslims in Vaniyambadi town (North Arcot District) and neighboring villages from the 19th to 23rd July 1946. Trouble started at about 4 p.m. on 19th when there was an altercation between the members of a *Kavadi* procession and the Muslim driver of a bullock cart which was found obstructing the route. Muslims in the locality came to the rescue of the driver and a clash ensued in which stones and sticks were freely used. Police arrived on the scene and separated the combatants. Muslims however objected to the procession proceeding through their quarters in the town and started pelting stones at the *Kavadi* procession and at the police who were escorting it. The Sub-Divisional Magistrate appealed to the Muslims to give way to the procession but it was of no avail. A lathi charge was then ordered and the mob dispersed. While police were thus engaged, hooligans of both communities entered the bazaar street and looted a number of Hindu and Muslim shops promiscuously. The *Kavadi* procession was taken to a temple and the processionists were guarded by the police throughout the night and escorted out of the town the next day.

On the 20th, some Muslim houses at Jaffarpur, an adjoining village, were set on fire by the Hindus. There was also a case of looting of a Muslim garden and bungalow in Kodayanchi village near Vaniyambadi as well as a case of arson in Sankarapuram village. On the same night, three Muslim tanneries, a lime depot and a smithy, all belonging to Muslims were set on fire.... In Vaniyambadi, an oil storage mill and a cocoanut *mundy* [market] belonging to Hindus were set on fire by the Muslims. In the evening a large number of Hindus assembled in the Palar riverbed with the intention of attacking the Muslims of Pariapet village. They were dispersed by the police after a lathi charge. Later, in the evening, the police dispersed by a lathi charge a mob of Muslims which had collected at the railway level crossing between Pudur and Govindapuram and of Hindus which had collected about two furlongs away by the use of tear gas. The police also averted a clash between a crowd of Hindus and Muslims which had collected in the field of Perumalpet village. Seven tanneries belonging to Muslims were set on fire. There were also other cases of arson. On the 22nd, a bus proceeding to Krishnagiri via Tirupattur was stoned by a crowd of Hindus who dispersed on sighting the police. There was also a clash between the Hindus of Perumalpet and the Muslims of Vaniyambadi....

... By the 23rd, conditions in the town and the surrounding areas had definitely improved, and many of the shops had opened. The members of both the communities continued to do intensive peace propaganda in Vaniyambadi and suburbs. The Premier also visited the affected area. He spoke to the peace committee members and the public and exhorted them to keep the peace. No incident has been reported after the 23rd.

P.D. Nayak,
for Additional Chief Secretary to Government.

4. A Congress Procession Sets Off Communal Disturbances in Ekkakudi, Ramnad

Extracts from an express letter by Public (General) Department, Government of Madras, to Intelligence Bureau, Home Department, Government of India; Fort St George, 9 August 1946. File No. 5/33/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

*Fort St George,
9 August 1946.*

On the 4th August 1946 rioting broke out at Ekkakudi, a predominantly Muslim village in the Ramnad district, following objection by Muslims to the taking out of a Congress procession through Muslim streets. A large mob numbering over 3000 collected and attempted to enter the village. Stones were thrown at Muslim houses and Muslim *darga* (Saint's tomb) was attacked by rioters. A lathi charge proved ineffective and fire was therefore opened on the orders of the Sub Divisional Magistrate. Six rounds were fired. Two persons both Hindus were injured of whom one died subsequently. To avoid further breach of peace, a prohibitory order under Section 144 CrPC was issued and additional police drafted to the village. The situation is now reported to be under control.

P.D. Nayak,
for Additional Chief Secretary to Government.

5. Hindu-Muslim Clash at Pudukonda, Anantpur, During Dashehra

Extracts from a telegram by Public (General) Department, Government of Madras, to Intelligence Bureau, Home Department, Government of India; 8 October 1946. File No. 5/43/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Hindu-Muslim clash reported at Pudukonda, Anantapur District, on the night of fifth October 1946 during Vijayadashmi (Dasara) procession. Muslims objected to the sounding of cymbals near the Pirla Chavadi a Muslim sacred spot.... As the situation became menacing fire had to be opened from muskets carried by constables after the usual warning. The Muslim crowd disappeared and the procession got to its destination without further trouble. In all twelve Hindus and seven Muslims were injured. None were hurt by the police firing....

6. At Chagalamarri, Kurnool, Hindu Procession Attacked with Sticks and Spears

Telegram by Public (General) Department, Government of Madras, to Intelligence Bureau, Home Department, Government of India; 12 October 1946. File No. 5/43/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Serious communal rioting reported at Chagalamarri, Kurnool District on 8th October 1946. Hindu procession taken under police bundobust was attacked by Muslim mob armed with

spears and sticks while passing mosque. Mob dispersed after lathi charge. Sometime later pelting of stones started on large scale from three directions. Police party and Magistrate received stone hits. Magistrate ordered opening of fire after due warning. Eleven rounds were fired. Three injured. Rioters chased and 43 arrested. Order restored. Procession got through to destination. Situation under control.

7. Serious Clash in Salem Over Celebrations of Gandhi Jayanti

Telegram by Public (General) Department, Government of Madras, to Intelligence Bureau, Home Department, Government of India; 12 October 1946. File No. 5/43/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Serious Hindu Muslim clash reported at Salem on ninth October 1946. Large procession [in] connection with Gandhi Jayanti celebrations stopped opposite mosque in bazaar area and refused to move. Stone throwing from Muslims inside mosque and retaliation by processionists started. Lathi charge by police proved of no avail. Sub Magistrate and police injured by stone hits. Police were compelled to open fire to disperse mob which was determined and very violent. Thirteen rounds were fired in all. Mob dispersed. Twenty-one injured and three killed. Situation now peaceful.

8. Evaluation of the Sangh and Guards in Madras Province

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Madras Province for the second half of December 1946. Fortnightly Reports; Public (General) Department, Government of Madras Province (1946); Tamil Nadu State Archives.

Volunteer Organisations

There are two main volunteer bodies in the Province, the Rashtriya Swayam Sevak Sangh and the Muslim National Guards. The former is an exclusively Hindu organisation with headquarters at Nagpur. It has gained a foothold in several districts and is apparently rapidly spreading. It is controlled by the Hindu Mahasabha and the ostensible object is to train Hindu youths in physical culture and to undertake such service as the Hindu Mahasabha directs. The members go through a regular course of physical exercises and occasionally hold rallies. Partly as an answer to this and partly as the policy of the Muslim League, Muslim League National Guards have recently come into being. This body is officially sponsored by the Muslim League. The members are trained in drill and fencing. The Muslim National Guards are capable of speedy expansion as the organisation is popular among Muslims. The existence of these two bodies side by side is not calculated to induce Hindu-Muslim harmony. In times of Hindu-Muslim disturbances they may indeed increase antagonism and the risk of incidents and clashes but the danger of their developing into potential private armies is not at present very serious.

Communal

The communal situation remained quiet during the fortnight. A certain amount of tension between the Hindus and Muslims however still remains, as is shown by a minor Hindu-Muslim clash at a village in Trichinopoly district, where a trivial incident in the bazaar took a communal turn and led to an attack on some Muslim traders and damage to their property.

4.viii THE CENTRAL PROVINCES AND BERAR

1. Rashtriya Swayamsewak Sangh Holds Training Camp at Akola, Berar

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for the Central Provinces and Berar for the second half of May 1946. File No. 18/5/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Communal

The Rashtriya Swayam Sewak Sangh held an officers' training camp at Akola which was attended by persons from all the Berar districts and from the Marathi speaking districts of the Central Provinces. The number of persons undergoing training at the camp is 452. The members are divided into batches which have been named after various Hindu heroes. Uniform is not worn, but drill is performed and strict discipline maintained.

2. Sangh and Khaksar Activities in the Central Provinces and Berar

Police Abstract of Intelligence; Vol. LXXI, No. 39; 28 September 1946. File No. 72; Political and Military Department, Government of the Central Provinces & Berar (1946); Madhya Pradesh State Archives.

RSS Sangh

In preparation for Desehra, members of the Jubbulpore branches daily received training in P.T., lathi, sword and *legim* [archery] exercises and marching. On the 22nd, as many as 1000 members assembled. Some organisers visited Rajim-Nawapara (Raipur) and in response to their appeal several Hindus joined the Sangh. The local Muslims scenting trouble decided to start an *Akahara* [an outdoor gymnasium] forthwith as a rejoinder to this move by Hindus. The Peace Committee, hearing of the situation created, lost no time in clearing the misunderstanding, leaders of both committees agreeing not to hold secret meetings in future and give cause for suspicion. Eknath Ranade speaking at a meeting at Arang (Raipur) described the aims and objects of the Sangh and invited Hindus to join the organisation to ensure their own solidarity and to make themselves physically fit so that they may not have cause to fear their closest enemy. Hari Krishna Joshi of Wardha inspected branches at Chhikli and Mehkar (Buldana). Speaking at both these places and at Akola he stressed the need for secrecy and requested his audience to join the Sangh and to establish branches in the interior in view of the present political and communal situation.

Khaksars

A new office was opened in Mominpura, Nagpur to facilitate the enrollment of members. 125 members are reported to have been enrolled in Nagpur. Sheikh Ahmed, Salar-e-Shahar, Amraoti was appointed Naib-Hakim-e-Ala, CP and Berar with headquarters at Nagpur. At a private meeting held at Amraoti on the 26th, Sheikh Ahmed criticized the Muslim League for soliciting Russian aid to secure Pakistan and said that the British Government was convinced about the League's weakness to enforce its demands.

3. Hindu-Muslim Fracas in Badnera, Amraoti

Telegram by General Administration Department, Government of the Central Provinces and Berar, to the Intelligence Bureau, Home Department, Government of India; Nagpur, 17 October 1946. File No. 5/53/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Hindu-Muslim fracas took place at Badnera in Amraoti district on evening of 14th instant. Immediate cause quarrel between Hindu and Muslim boys. Trouble spread to town and both communities began to pelt each other with stones and resorted to incendiarism resulting in both Hindu and Muslim shops and houses being burnt and damaged. Police arrived on the scene and when warning to disperse was not heeded opened fire. As a result of firing one Muslim and one Mahar killed and 10 Muslims and one Mahar wounded. Cause of Mahars being included in casualties is that they live in immediate neighbourhood and had apparently mixed with Muslim crowd as spectators. Goonda Act being applied to areas affected.

4.ix ASSAM

1. League Organises Protection for East Bengal Migrants in Assam

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Assam for the first half of May 1946. File No. 18/5/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Communal

The Muslim League is said to be attempting to raise a band of one lakh volunteers to protect the interests of the immigrants. League leaders are believed to be encouraging encroachers to rebuild their houses as soon as they are evicted, and it has been decided to appoint guards to secure the professional grazing reserves from interference. So far the evictions have been carried out, save a show of resistance reported at some places in Mangaldai. In that subdivision, it is reported, some five hundred persons only have been affected and in all but thirty-six cases the evicted persons assisted in dismantling their houses and removing materials. Sick persons were left undisturbed and crops were left standing, but sold by auction. The Assamese population in this area, which is considerable, is said to have adopted a neutral attitude to these events.

2. Encroachments on Grazing Lands by Migrants Causes Animosity

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Assam for the second half of May 1946. File No. 18/5/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Communal

The early onset of the rains led to the suspension of evictions in the Kamrup and Darrang districts, when the bulk of the immediate programme had been fulfilled. The business had in general been carried out very smoothly and the Hon'ble Revenue Minister has paid tribute to the assistance given by the Police. The Deputy Commissioner, Darrang, states that latterly the encroachers had shown a great willingness to cooperate. There is unfortunately a good deal of reencroachment going on, no doubt partially at least due to the propaganda of the Muslim

League, and there will be a serious aftermath in the shape of such a large number of criminal cases that the local officers will find it hard to cope with them. The intimation that both Congress and Muslim League are endeavoring to build up bodies of volunteers is an unpleasant indication of the growth in communal feeling which, it is now beginning to be recognised more widely, is not the artificial production of British design but an awakening of fissiparous tendencies *pari passu* with the gradual relaxation of control from a strong Central Government. Muslim Guards at Jorhat are reported to be performing night practice in the use of daggers, swords and spears. Despite peaceful completion of evictions in Mangaldai Subdivision tension between the Assamese and the immigrants is stated to be plainly noticeable. During the period similar animosities were exhibited in quite different quarters. Feeling amongst Assamese owing to encroachment by Miris on a grazing reserve resulted in a double murder. In Nowing district there was a riot between Lalung and Hira cultivators and another between two parties of Lahungs. Two Muslims who endeavored to intervene in the latter were both so severely assaulted that they died. In the same district a Muslim youth who was taking a Nepali and Khasi girl, both of whom had married Muslims and embraced Islam, to Bengal was noticed by a Nepali Watch and Ward man on the Railway, with the result that a crowd of Nepalis gathered to interfere in the affair. The trouble was averted by the Police who sent the party by another route.

3. Government Resolved to Prevent Unilateral Encroachments on Grazing Lands

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Assam for the first half of July 1946. File No. 18/7/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Political

... The second eviction of encroachers on grazing reserves in Mangaldai appears to have been carried out successfully, though how far the present quiet is due to weather conditions is not quite plain. In Barpeta, on the other hand, 25 cases of theft from attached paddy have been reported. Government are meanwhile determined to carry their policy to the logical conclusion of completely protecting these reserves against unilateral occupation.

Communal

Apart from the strained conditions in the areas where evictions took place there has been no event of importance. Quarrels between rival factions of schoolchildren in Dhubri took a communal trend and led to the formation of rival bands. A meeting held with the local leaders appears to have put a stop to this unrest.

4. Protest Meetings Against Evicting Encroachers

Extracts from Paragraphs for Monthly Summary for the Cabinet; 15 July 1946. File No. 5/12/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Assam (First and Second Halves of June)

A number of protest meetings took place against the policy of evicting encroachers from grazing reserves. One hundred and fifty persons are stated to have returned to the reserves in Mangaldai

subdivision and further action had to be taken there and in Kamrup. The onset of the monsoon has made such measures burdensome.

Some unrest was noticeable in Nowgong district when a rumor was spread by Muslim mischief mongers that some Kacharis and Lalungs were intending to oust the Muslim immigrants from the neighboring area. Some 2000 Muslim immigrants armed with lathi and *daos* had collected but dispersed at the request of wiser men of the community.

There were two minor incidents of a communal nature, one at Sibsagar and the other at Silchar, arising out of quarrels in football matches.

5. Disturbances in Sylhet on August 16

News report, 'Troops called out at Sylhet'. *Hindustan Times*, 29 August 1946.

Sylhet, August 26. Following the recent disturbances in the Sylhet town which broke out on August 16, a large contingent of military has been stationed in the town and also in the subdivisions of the disturbances. Armed police and military are patrolling Sylhet streets as a precaution. No breach of law and order, however, has been reported. The Assam Provincial Jamiat-ul-Ulema has appealed to the Muslims of Assam to dissociate themselves from any violence and expressed strong disapproval of goondalism. — API.

6. Eviction from Assam of East Bengali Immigrants

Note, 11 November 1946, by E.J. Beveridge, Assistant Director, Intelligence Bureau, Home Department, Government of India. File No. 119/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Communal

.. It had been decided by the Ministry to start eviction of illegal Muslim immigrants in the Assam Valley early in November, but it is now reported that these evictions will not start till the middle of November. If these evictions are taken up with the communal tension as high as it is at the moment, it can be fairly said without a shadow of doubt that the Muslims of the Surma Valley will retaliate against Hindus there. Muslim immigrants in the Assam Valley are being encouraged by Abdul Hamid Khan and others to resist eviction, and it is reported that there has been an increased influx into the immigrant areas of a large number of Muslims very recently.... The Hindus of the Surma Valley are frightened and the leader of the Hindu Mahasabha in Habiganj called a meeting at which it was decided that Hindus would endeavor, where they were in a majority, to send parties to assist Hindus in places in which they were in the minority. In connection with these evictions, some of the Assam Ministers hold that Muslims are being deliberately brought into the Assam Valley in order finally to turn the province into a Muslims majority Province, but no direct evidence to this effect has ever come the way of this office. Many refugees from the riot-affected areas of Noakhali and Tipperah have come to Assam and practically all of them are Hindus. The daily arrival rate in the province is in the range of about 400 and conservative estimates indicate that there are probably more than 5 or 6 thousand of them already in the province. Local relief committees are giving food and

shelter, but the refugees are spreading the stories of Muslim atrocities which have helped to aggravate communal feeling.

E.J. Beveridge,
Assistant Director (S),
11.11.1946.

7. Communal Situation in Assam

Extracts from Paragraphs for Monthly Summary for the Cabinet; 15 December 1946.
File No. 5/12/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Assam (First and Second Halves of November)

The *Bakr-Id* passed without any incident although in several cases particularly in Lakhimpur and Tazpur efforts were made to make trouble over cow sacrifice. There were two minor incidents in Habiganj town; a turtle shell was found on the steps of a mosque with a crude carving of the Imam upon it, accompanied by provocative leaflet. Some sort of desecration of a Hindu shrine with cattle bones also occurred. A meeting of Gurkhas in Gauhati on the 4th November protested against the alleged prohibition of the *kukri* which was asserted to be a symbol, i.e., weapon comparable with the *kirpan* of the Sikhs.

A peace preservation party which moved out on hearing of trouble in a village in Mangaldai division was assaulted. Later some Kacharis assaulted Muslim shopkeepers from Dacca in Kalaigaon area.

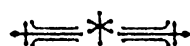
There was considerable tension in the first half of November owing to the agitation against the eviction policy of the Government though it had been accepted by the previous (Muslim League) Ministry. There were a few incidents in this connection in the first half of the month, with one or two exceptions, displayed a milder tone and the tension eased to some extent.

The continued influx of immigrants and apprehension of planned aggression led to a few incidents and many false alarms.

Some alarm was caused at Pandu by the accidental meeting of two peace partols one of which shouted *Bande Mataram*, with the result that rioting was thought to have broken out.

Some nuisance was caused by officious attempts to stop alleged abduction of Hindu girls which have been found on investigation to have been founded on false information. Feelings in Makum (Lakhimpur) ran high over the elopement of the local Muslim League Secretary with a Nepali girl who has since returned to her family. Rumor that an Assamese Muslim contractor had sacrificed a cow against custom led to some provocative demonstration in Tinsukia in the same District.

There has been communal hostility in the Murarichand College and the CC Raja High School at Sylhet culminating in an attack by Muslim youths on the son of the stationmaster, who was stabbed but not seriously injured.



8. Evictions Continue Slowly and Steadily

Note, 11 January 1947, by P.E.S. Finney, Assistant Director, Intelligence Bureau, Home Department, Government of India. File No. 119/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Evictions continue slowly and steadily. In order to check propaganda against them which might lead to breeches of the peace, a few arrests have been made. Some of those arrested have obtained their release by furnishing interim bonds to keep the peace. The Muslim League are making arrangements for the defence of the remainder.

In the Mangaldai subdivision the first series of evictions has been completed successfully. As a precautionary measure the entry of the Provincial League President and Secretary to the subdivision was banned u/s 144 CrPC. The League retaliated with a decision to hold a hartal throughout Assam on January 3rd as a protest against this latest Congress 'atrocities'. The influx of new immigrants has slowed down and many are reported to have gone back to Bengal having seen no hope of being able to settle.

P.E.S. Finney,
Deputy Director (A).
11 Jan. 1947.

9. Visit by Khurshid Anwar to Assam Sets Back Communal Relations

Note, 11 January 1947, by P.E.S. Finney, Assistant Director, Intelligence Bureau, Home Department, Government of India. File No. 119/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

The communal situation continues to show definite signs of improvement though a temporary setback occurred during the visit of 'Major' Khurshid Anwar of the All India Muslim National Guard. His speeches were most inflammatory. He urged Muslims to raise a National Guard capable of making any sacrifice for Pakistan and opposing the Assam Government's evictions. He alleged that 70,000 Muslims had been slaughtered in Bihar and said that serious disturbances would continue in India; Muslims should therefore be so armed as to be ready to kill ten Hindus each in self-defence.

The visit of Md. Ismail of the AITUC had a considerably sobering effect on communal passions in areas previously visited by the 'Major'.

10. Limitations Imposed Upon Size of Religious Processions

Extracts from Paragraphs for Monthly Summary for the Cabinet; 14 January 1947. File No. 5/12/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Assam (First and Second Halves of December)

The eviction programme has not involved any incidents. Various attempts to keep up feelings are reported in Mangaldai subdivision. There seems to be some reduction in the flow of immigrants.

Sectional aspirations were exhibited in the continuance of activity by the Gurkhas League.

Objections against the limitations imposed on the size of religious processions have resulted in the postponement of the Moharrum procession at Sylhet. At another place difficulties were surmounted by excavating a road so as to allow the *tazia* to pass below a banyan tree.

4.X ORISSA

1. Bhadrak, Balasore, Communal Fracas: Revenue Commissioner's Report Unsatisfactory

Extracts from Report No. 9, 9 August 1946, by the Governor of Orissa to the Viceroy. File No. 5/31/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

... I regret to have to report that, contrary to my expectations, a communal fracas took place at Bhadrak in the Balasore district on the 24th July. I sent a telegraphic report of this incident both to you and the Secretary of State in my telegram No. 14 of the 25th July. The facts so far gathered are that on the 24th the Hindus, in accordance with a licence given to them by the police, took out a procession and, when they were about to pass a mosque with music at a time when congregational prayers were not in progress in the mosque, the Hindus were obstructed by a Muslim crowd which was armed with lathis. Attempts to persuade the Muslims not to obstruct the processionists failed. The Muslims also refused to disperse after they were declared an unlawful assembly, although they were warned that firing would take place. Eventually it became necessary to fire on the crowd. Altogether 10 rounds were fired. Eight Muslims were injured and 3 were killed. We sent the Revenue Commissioner and the Deputy Inspector-General of Police to make enquiries into the incident. The Revenue Commissioner's finding is that the Subdivisional Officers was fully justified in ordering fire to be opened and that the firing of 10 rounds cannot be regarded as excessive in view of the critical situation prevailing at that time. He adds that the fire was well controlled and ceased as soon as it had secured its object of dispersing the mob. Unfortunately the Revenue Commissioner did not make a formal enquiry. He did not examine the local officers. He examined 4 Hindus and 6 Muslims, but out of these latter 4 were casualties in hospital as a result of the firing.

The Muslims held protest meetings in Cuttack and Bhadrak and the Muslim shops observed a hartal in Cuttack on the 26th. At these meetings a resolution was passed condemning the police firing and asking for a nonofficial committee to investigate into the incident. This demand for an enquiry has been supported by Communists, the Radical Democrats and Provincial Congress Committee. When we deputed the Revenue Commissioner to Bhadrak we had thought that his enquiry would dispose of a demand for a further enquiry, but after receiving his report it became clear both to the Prime Minister and myself that finding of the Revenue Commissioner, in the absence of a detailed enquiry, was not really helpful and could not be used for resisting the demand for an investigation. On the facts before me my own view is that the firing was justified. We have therefore nothing to fear from an enquiry into the necessity of firing at Bhadrak by an officer of the rank of Sessions Judge....

... I have two days ago received a resolution from the Provincial Muslim League stating that the Mussalmans would never allow any music before any mosque at any time according to the established usage. Our orders are that in the absence of any custom, agreement, or a decision of a Civil Court the ordinary practice should be that processions should be allowed to

pass places of worship with music during nonprayer hours. Those who demand that music should be stopped at all times before places of worship must prove that there is an agreement, custom or a decision of a Civil Court to that effect. The burden of proof in this matter cannot lie on the other side. This is in accordance with authoritative judicial decisions. This matter may assume importance in this Province if the Muslim League carries out its threat of direct action, and it may well be that this issue may be chosen in Orissa. As I have stated before, our orders are unexceptionable, but I should be very grateful if you could have them looked at by Waugh, the Home Member.

All of us very much regret this incident at Bhadrak, as the relations between the two communities throughout the Province have been very good in the past. We have established a Conciliation Committee of Hindus and Muslims at Bhadrak, but I am afraid it does not appear to be working very satisfactorily. Additional police has been retained for the time being at Bhadrak, and on the 25th July, that is the next day after the firing, another Hindu procession passed the same mosque with music outside prayer hours without any opposition or protest from the Muslims.

4.xi SIND

1. Disturbances at a Meeting in Larkana, Sind Addressed by Jawaharlal Nehru

Extracts from a news report, 'Muslim scene at Nehru meeting'. *Statesman*, 6 January 1946.

Larkana (Sind), January 5. Some Muslims created a disturbance at a public meeting addressed by Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru in Larkana today. In his speech Pandit Nehru referred to the Muslim League as an organisation with a reactionary programme. This was the signal for trouble and some Muslims who were in the audience shouted that they were not prepared to hear any criticism of the League. Confusion prevailed for a time but Congress volunteers restored order and Pandit Nehru continued his speech. Groups of Muslims then assembled at a distance but they were dispersed by the police....

2. Condition of Hindus Under Muslim League Ministry in Sind

Extracts from a letter by Sind Provincial Hindu Sabha, Karachi, to Working Committee, All India Hindu Mahasabha, New Delhi; Karachi, 12 April 1946. File No. C-117; All India Hindu Mahasabha Papers (1946); Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

Karachi,
12th April 1946.

Dear Sirs,

I have read the news in papers regarding the forthcoming session of the Hindu Maha Sabha Working Committee being held ... on the 14th instant. As the time is very narrow, I am so sorry that I am not able to attend the conference personally nor it is possible to depute any representative to express the viewpoints of Sind Hindus. I am therefore, putting before you the position of Hindus in this province through the medium of this letter, brief though it must be, I hope it will give you a fair idea of the position of this province.

You are fully aware that in the recent provincial elections, all the Congress candidates who contested on Hindu seats have come out successful and not a single non-Congress Hindu is to be found in the Sind Assembly. These Congress members have now joined hands with certain Mohamedan members and thus formed a Coalition Party under the leadership of Mr Syed. Unfortunately the Coalition Party could not muster up sufficient majority so as to come in power and form the governing ministry, with the result that full-fledged Muslim League government is reigning over the whole province. As you might have already noticed, the only job which the Muslim League government is anxious to do is to pass laws and do such work as may benefit Muslims of the province only. With this idea, almost all the district officers are Muslims and other key posts are also held by them with a view that they may help the ministers or Assembly members in several cases of injustice, whether by fair or foul ways. Sometimes the Assembly members themselves are involved in certain criminal cases but are somehow or the other declared innocent.

Recently one notorious dacoit by name of Alankhan was sentenced to death by the Sessions Court, as he along with some of his party of Muslim dacoits had attacked one Hindu marriage procession in Manjhand (Distt. Dadu) and killed some people, injured several others and looted [the] post office, etc. But this ministry of ours was indeed so kind that they cancelled the order of his death sentence and instead sentenced this symbol of notoriety to life transportation.

This ministry is doing almost everything to see that Muslims flourish in all kinds of trade and business also and preference is given to them for getting licenses, etc., for doing business in cloth, food, sugar, etc., with the result that several Hindus who were previously doing the trade have now been thrown [made] unemployed and are crying for their bare livelihood.

In the question of Government service also the first preference in all cases is given to Muslims even if they are not worthy of the posts. In several cases, the junior Muslims are made to supersede the senior Hindus.

The Land Alienation and the University Bills which have recently been introduced in the Sind Assembly will drive away Hindus from the field of agriculture also; several changes are contemplated to be made in the curriculum of education also which will completely aim at revolutionising the Hindu civilization.

That is the exact position of Muslim League ministry here. The reason why it is doing so much for the Muslims and harming the very interests of Hindus is obvious—the Muslim League ministers wish to show to their Muslim masses that they are doing everything for the benefit of the latter. They are thus able to create the atmosphere which compels the nationalist Muslims and members of Syed Group not to openly oppose those measures which are brought [before the Assembly] mainly for the benefit of Muslims.

Congress members also want to show to Muslims through their speeches that they have also benefitted Muslims in several ways and would benefit them in future too in this and that way, first to please their Muslim comrades so that they may not slip away from them at any time.

If this is the policy of Congress members on the opposition side, one doubts what they will be able to do when they come in power and form the ministry. On one side, Mr Syed will try his level best to do everything for the benefit of Muslims to obtain their goodwill and on the other hand, the Congress members also will not interfere with him lest the so-formed ministry may break. In fact, it means that Hindus will be victims from either side. Hindus have neither gained nor will they ever gain anything from the Congress members so far as their special rights are concerned. It is just possible, of course, that in order to avoid propaganda and displeasure in the minds of Hindus, the Congress Party may give some attention to some of the

important points relating to Hindus, but it is doubtful if any special rights of Hindus can be protected by the Congress or the Coalition ministry.

The most important task before the Hindu Maha Sabha at present, therefore, is to bring the grievances of Hindus to the attention of Congress members from time to time and to get them redressed. Arrangements should be made to have some suitable and worthy propaganda.

The Hindu Maha Sabha should also give some attention to the practical work. Each and every village should be physically connected with its district, every district to the province and finally every province with ... India as a whole. Steps should be taken by the Hindu Maha Sabha to see that the Hindus are well organised in the various lines of trade and industries.

At the same time, for example the entire peasantry work in Sind is in the hands of Muslims and there are hardly any Hindu *haris* (peasants). These should be an all-India plan to see that if Hindus are scarce in any line [of work], arrangements should be made to import Hindus in that line from other provinces where they may be sufficiently dominant, so far [as] that particular line is concerned....

3. Increased Activity by Hindu and Muslim Volunteer Organisations in Nawabshah District

Extracts from Paragraphs for Monthly Summary for the Cabinet; 18 June 1946. File No. 5/12/46; Home (Political) Department, Government, of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Sind (Second Half of May)

There has been no marked deterioration [in the communal situation]. Increased activity on the part of the Muslim League National Guards and the holding of a camp by the Rashtriya Sewa Dal in Nawabshah District are reported.

4. Sind Hindus Ask for Protection of Congress

Printed circular by Arya Pratinidhi Sabha, Karachi; undated, but received by All India Hindu Mahasabha, New Delhi, on 17 July 1946. File No. C-105 (1946); All India Hindu Mahasabha Papers (1946); Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

Three Important Resolutions Passed by the Arya Pratinidhi Sabha, Sind

1. This Sabha notes with deep pain that the Muslim League Ministry has been, on set purpose, doing all it can to make the life of Hindu minority miserable and unbearable in the Province of Sind. Religious and civic rights of the Hindus have been trampled underfoot. On not a few occasions have the religious processions been forbidden and unjust ban has been put on the *Satyarth Prakash*, which for the present day Hindu is as important as the Quran or the Bible for the Muslim and the Christian [respectively].

The Hindus are being deprived of their legitimate share in public services and all key posts in Government are being given to the Muslims. Hindu landholders are being troubled in every possible way. They are being dispossessed of lands that they have owned for several decades. Efforts are being made to oust them out of [the] commercial sphere [of life].

Hindu educational institutions are being looked [at] with an eye of suspicion and stepmotherly treatment is being accorded to them. Those engaged in an innocent movement like the Rashtra SS Sangh aiming at raising the moral tone and improving the physique of the students are also being harassed.

To aggravate the situation, provocative and violence-inciting speeches are being delivered by Muslim League workers and sometimes even by Muslim League Ministers themselves. Lawlessness, in the form of murders, dacoities and thefts, is, therefore, on the increase.

The Sabha, therefore, urges upon the Sind Hindus to sink their differences and make an organized effort to ventilate grievances and get them redressed at an early date.

2. The Sabha requests the Congress leaders both of provincial and all India reputation to give special attention to the difficulties and disabilities of the Hindus of the province of Sind viz., the ban on the *Satyarth Prakash*, interference with the activities of the Rashtra SS Sangh, the willful dislocation and disorganisation of Hindu trade, systematic efforts to drive away the Hindus from agriculture and robbing him of his due share in public services.

The Congress in its election campaign has promised to protect the rights of the minorities and to fight for justice.

The Hindus of the province depending upon this promise, voted for Congress candidates at the polls and helped them to get all the seats of the assembly allotted to them.

3. The ancient Aryan policy, which the Arya Samaj wishes to revive is democratic in its form. Therefore this Sabha would like that all Indian States should adopt this form. The Sabha therefore welcomes the efforts of the Indian National Congress and the State Peoples' Conference in this behalf.

While so doing the Sabha requests both these bodies to help only such agitation as is bonafide and noncommunal and to deal with Hindu and Muslim states in the same spirit and at the same time.

In the opinion of this Sabha the movement sponsored by Sheikh Abdullah of Kashmir is not a bonafide one and it has ulterior communal motives behind it. Those sponsoring movements aiming at the amelioration of general public should be polite and decent in their utterances. The Sabha is pained to learn that some of the workers of Kashmir have been using filthy and abusive language against ruling family.

Hundraj Madnani,
General Secretary,
Arya Pratinidhi Sabha, Sind.

4.xii NORTH WEST FRONTIER PROVINCE

1. Rioting in Abbottabad, NWFP

Telegram by NORWEF [?] to Intelligence Bureau, Home Department, Government of India: undated Peshawar, received 31 July 1946. File No. 5/30/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Serious rioting accompanied by looting and attempted arson occurred Abbottabad city Sunday evening following rape of Muslim girl by Sikh shopkeeper. Military called in to restore order and night curfew imposed till further orders. Police used gas no repeat no small arms fire by Police or military. Ten reported civilian casualties including two killed caused by indiscriminate

firing by civilian Sikhs. No repeat no service casualties. Situation Abbottabad under control. Local press communique has been issued on above lines and Chief Minister has left for Abbotabad.

2. Mitchell Report Blames District Authorities for the Spread of Abbottabad Riots

Extracts from a news report, 'Abbottabad (NWFP) riot enquiry'. *Hindustan Times*, 26 August 1946.

Peshawar, August 25th. Accepting the led finding of Mr A.N. Mitchell, special officer deputed to inquire in to the circumstances that held to the communal riot in Abbotabad on July 28, the Frontier Government says that had District Magistrate by midday on July 28 taken a grave view of the situation, the subsequent unfortunate events could have been prevented....

The report stated: "On the afternoon of July 27, 1946 a Sikh shopkeeper was accused of attempting to rape a minor Muslim girl of the village of Sheikh Ulbandi....

"The alleged rape of the Muslim girl by the Sikh caused a great sensation and some hundreds of Muslims assembled in the police 'chowki' in the bazar where preliminary investigation took place. It was very soon after this that one Prem Singh, brother of the accused man, was assaulted. In fact his injuries were simple but rumor went so far as to relate that he had been beaten to death by a mob of two hundred Muslims. Leaders of both communities took a serious view of the possible results and telephone and direct conversation took place between them. As a result the Singh Sabha passed a resolution condemning the outrage and the resolution was broadcast from the Gurdwara through a loud speaker."

"It requires to be stated very clearly" continued the report, "that in the evidence of 52 witnesses which has come on the record, there is no proof that before or at the time of the trouble there were any political circumstances which would have led up to it. One can understand while regretting them the feelings of the Sikhs and the Hindus after the events which have led them to criticize the District Magistrate bitterly and in certain cases to speak openly of his political bias. But of this there is no evidence on record and his conduct of affairs has been fully discussed and explained in the light of contemporary facts without the necessity of importing extraneous reasons....

"It requires to be repeated in conclusion that an early anticipation of the trend of events by the district authorities which would have been possible had the sources of intelligence been efficient and an early display of considerable military force in the absence of adequate police, combined with obvious goodwill of the leaders of all communities, could have prevented all but the earliest individual assaults on the Sikhs...."

3. Fakir of Ipi Welcomes Interim Government at a Tribal Jirga

Extracts from a news report, 'Frontier tribes solidly behind Congress'. *Hindustan Times*, 1 October 1946.

Bannu, September 30. "We have the greatest regard for Indian National Congress leaders. We hold them in utmost respect. We treat Hindus and Sikhs as our brethern. I have never ordered my followers to kidnap Hindus and Sikhs from British India. All these kidnapping incidents are the result of the forward policy of British Imperialists," said the Faqir of Ipi,

before a *jirga* of prominent representatives of various tribes held in a jungle near his cave in the Shivali hills.

The conference included Mahsuds, Waziris, Budhikhels, Shinwanes, Mangal Afridis, and Mohamands. The Faqir of Ipi presided. The conference passed a resolution unanimously, congratulating Pandit Nehru on the formation of the Interim Government....

4. Jawaharlal Nehru and Party Attacked at Dargai and Malakand Fort

Extracts from a news report, 'Political Agent accused of conspiracy'. *Hindustan Times*, 24 October 1946.

Peshawar, October 23. Badshah Khan, speaking at Sardaryab on Monday, charged the Political Agent with conspiring a murderous assault on Pandit Nehru, Dr Khan Sahib and himself near Dargai and held him responsible for the attack made on them just outside Malakand Fort in which all the three were injured and their car smashed.

Further facts coming to light show clearly that the disgraceful incidents on Monday took place not only at the Political Agent's instance but under 'orders' from him. The agent is alleged to have promised full protection to Government servants and hooligans who demonstrated against Pandit Nehru and made violent attack on him and his party. He is also alleged to have assured them that neither Dr Khan Sahib nor Pandit Nehru could touch them for whatever they did.

This view is very widely shared by the public and even Government servants in Malakand.

Fearing ugly disclosures, the Political Agent is alleged to be trying to get members of the *jirga* which saw Pandit Nehru against his wishes assaulted in order to strike terror into their hearts.

First Political Protest

It may be mentioned that in the whole history of Malakand Agency, Monday's incident was the first sign of political protest. Even demonstrators who attacked Pandit Nehru's car near Malakand Fort admitted that they had never till then taken part in any kind of political activity. When I asked them why they had remained inactive while the adjoining district of Marjan had been so politically active, they admitted they never had the courage to raise even their little fingers against the constituted authority though they had many grievances.

"And you suddenly acquired strength overnight to stage such violent demonstrations against Pandit Nehru, Member-in-Charge of the External Affairs Department?" I asked. "Yes," they said....

5. Transborder Tribals Fined for Incursions and Attacks at Hazara

Extracts from Paragraphs for Monthly Summary for the Cabinet; 14 January 1946. File No. 5/12/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

NWFP (First and Second Halves of December)

Mention has been made of the attack by transborder hill tribes on the Hazara border in the previous summary. Further incidents occurred in villages close to the border. A serious situation developed in the southwest of Abbottabad. Casualties are still difficult to ascertain but between

a dozen and a score of Sikhs have probably been murdered and a few Muslim refugees camps have been established.

Punishment in the form of fines in cash and rifles has been enforced on the transborder tribes for incursion into Hazara district and murder and destruction of property.

4.xiii BALUCHISTAN

1. Communal Disturbances in Baluchistan

Cypher telegram from Baluchistan, Ziarat [sic], to Foreign [sic], New Delhi; 1 September 1946. File No. 5/51/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

I regret to report that rioting occurred in Quetta City last night resulting in death of four Hindus and injuries to fifteen including three Moslems as last mail reported. Trouble began because Moslem tailor's son jostled two Hindu women who were entering Arya Samaj Hall. Section 144 (repeat 144) promulgated preventing carriage of weapons and meetings except for election meetings if necessary. Military standing by in case of possible ingress of tribesmen. Press communique being issued.

4.xiv AJMER-MERWARA

1. Ajmer-Merwara Muslims' Lack of Job Opportunities in the Services

Copy of a letter under the heading 'Jobbery in Ajmer-Merwara' published in the Dawn, 5 April 1946, is enclosed in the file. File No. 37/11/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Sir,

In your esteemed paper prominent Muslims have pointed out the great disparity in the number of posts held by the Hindus and Muslims in respective departments. The writers of these letters will find it interesting to know that there are places where the situation is still worse.

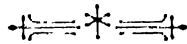
I give below the distribution of Government gazetted appointments in Ajmer-Merwara and shall be glad to know if the Government of India is aware or should be aware of these situations. It has become a fashion to say that the Muslims are so unreasonable that they demand Pakistan. The real fact is that the Hindus are so fortunate that they have got their Akhand Hindustan. Now examine the list given below:

The Chief Commissioner, Officiating Deputy Commissioner, Assistant Commissioner, Additional Assistant Commissioner, District Judge, Additional District Judge, Sub-Judge (First class), Assistant Sub-Judge, Sub-Judge Beawar, Extra Assistant Commissioner, Mewara, Beawar Sub Divisional Officer, Kekri Extra Officer, Treasury Officer, Registrar Cooperative Societies Ajmer, Labour Welfare Officer, Rural Development Officer, Assistant Agricultural Marketing Officer, Animal Husbandry Officer, Income Tax Officer, Settlement Officer (Settlement Office), Executive Engineer PWD, Forest Officer, Superintendent of Education, Secretary Rajputana Board, Assistant Superintendent of Police, Deputy Superintendent of Police, Deputy

Superintendent of Police attached to Office, Additional Civil Surgeon, Assistant Circle Officer, National Savings [Officer?], Town Rationing Officer, Official Receiver, Financial Assistant to the Chief Commissioner, Registrar to Judicial Commissioner and Jailor Central Jail Ajmer, are all Hindus. Only the City Magistrate, Director of Civil Supplies, Sub-Judge, Superintendent of Excise Revenue, Post-War Reconstruction Officer, and Publicity Officer and Muslims.

It will be interesting to compare this list with the one left by Sir George Gillan when the post of Commissioner was separated from that of the Resident Rajputana.

Fairplay.



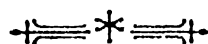
Chapter 5. Economy and Society

The type of source-materials required for a collection entitled 'Towards Freedom' imparts a limited and scrappy character to an 'Economy and Society' section. We did come across some interesting data, however, which it would have been a pity to throw away, even though anything like a comprehensive documentation would have involved consultation of official and other archives of a nature rather different from the ones principally utilized here. The deliberate limitation in the main to English-language material, explained in the overall Introduction to this volume, proved particularly restrictive for this chapter.

The documents in this chapter have been grouped under five sections, with somewhat varied principles of arrangement. We begin with 'Economic Conditions', subdivided into material on the food situation, which remained fairly critical throughout the year, responses (particularly among business groups) to certain government financial policies (demonetization, excess profits tax, sales tax, sterling balances), and a specific controversy in Orissa around the proposed Hirakud Dam. The latter provides an interesting case study, with very many resonances today, of the conflicting demands of development, ecology, the interests of local inhabitants, and a variety of regional pressures.

The succeeding section on 'Caste' is probably the richest part of this chapter. Here a general sub-section, mainly about Ambedkarite activities on an all-India level, is followed by a province-wise classification: CP and Berar, Bombay, Madras (the three most active regions in this respect in 1946), UP, Bengal, and Punjab. The documents relate mainly to Scheduled Castes' grievances and movements, but there is also a little interesting data about Backward Caste organization from UP, with the Yadavs already prominent.

The 'Regional' section contains a little material from Assam and the North-East, and Bihar (particularly the Jharkhand issue). 'Gender' is also poorly represented, consisting in the main in a few documents from the proceedings of the All Indian Women's Conference. The chapter ends with a section on 'Culture', rendered obviously very inadequate by the language factor. This includes brief references to the Hindi-Hindusthani controversy, shot through as always by dimensions of communal and caste tension. Predictably, the advocate of Sanskritized Hindi is a high-caste Hindu, while the case for Hindusthani is put forward by a group cutting across community barriers and with affiliations part Gandhian, part Left-wing. We end with some material on the Indian Peoples' Theatre Association (IPTA), which, as volumes on earlier years would have indicated, played a crucial role in fostering secular and progressive values and extremely impressive artistic talent during the mid-Forties and subsequent years. Above all, the IPTA sought to bridge the gap between the intellectuals and the toilers, with occasional remarkable success. Chapter 3 has included a document describing a peasant meeting at the height of Tebhaga in Bengal where IPTA songs played a crucial part. In an attempt to convey a little of the atmosphere of those times, the IPTA sub-section here begins with translated extracts from a famous Tebhaga song. [Ed.]



5.A ECONOMIC CONDITIONS

5.A.i Food Situation

1. Drought Causes Extensive Damage to Crops in Madras Province

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Madras Province for the first half of January 1946. Fortnightly Reports; Public (General) Department, Government of Madras (1946); Tamil Nadu State Archives.

There has been no rainfall this fortnight and the position in some districts has, if possible, worsened. In South Arcot it is found that the paddy crop in years would give an outturn of only six to eight annas and the young paddy is not likely to mature at all over large areas, owing to lack of water in tanks and channels. In Chingleput the Collector reports that prospects of crops in the District are getting steadily worse and a large extent of paddy on dry land will fail as well as a certain amount of the wet crop. In Chittoor there is hardly any water in tanks and standing crops have withered already or are withering. In Nellore paddy cultivation is reported to have practically failed in eleven taluks out of the thirteen in the district, and the fate of *clolam*, the main dry crop, is still uncertain. In Bellary the Collector reports that conditions are deteriorating and even the *hingari* crop is not likely to yield much. In Salem the level of water in the Mettur Dam has fallen to 12.6 ft and there has been no improvement in the food situation. In Madura the turn system has been introduced in the Periyar and with this, it may be possible to mature the crop in the Periyar area, though there will be some reduction in the yield. In the areas not served by the Periyar, however, some tanks are practically empty and there will probably be considerable failure of the crops. The rice position in the district is reported to be extremely precarious due to delay in receipt of supplies from Travancore. In Ramnad the paddy crop has failed except in a coastal belt of about ten miles and in certain areas under the Vaigai river. Even in these areas the yield is likely to be below the normal. Millets have fared no better. Here too the Collector characterises the food situation as 'precarious' as all procured stocks have been consumed. In Tinnevely the water in the Papanasam reservoir has gone down and though it is just adequate at present, the position is likely to be very difficult if the drought continues. Owing to transport difficulties, supplies of Trivandrum rice have not been coming in quickly enough and there is acute shortage in many areas in this district. In Malabar the second crop yield in some areas has been affected by lack of rain. In Tanjore though the main paddy crop now ready for harvest is generally satisfactory, the outturn of the early second crop will be affected while the late second crop is not likely to yield anything and in some places is reported to be drying up already for want of either rain or tank water. In Trichinopoly the Collector reports that the yield from dry crops, except in the Cauvery area, is very poor while tanks are almost empty.

An intensive drive for procurement is already under way and it is proposed to introduce informal rationing in Chingleput, Chittoor and North Arcot districts. The measures are however not permanent remedies, and speedy help from outside is urgently needed. Meanwhile the Government are also exploring ways and means of popularising other foodstuffs, especially groundnut and sweet potatoes, and it may be ultimately necessary to issue these as part of the ration scale. The Government of India have already been addressed separately to cancel the

quotas of groundnut export, which have been allotted, but not yet moved, so that sufficient stocks may be conserved in this province. The Agricultural Department is also considering methods of increasing the production of sweet potatoes, while Messrs. Parry & Co have been asked whether they can take up the process of dehydrating them.

2. Food Position in Bombay Province

Extracts from minutes of a meeting held on 16 January 1946 by the Food Advisory Council, Finance (Supply) Department, Government of Bombay. File No. 294; Purshotamdas Thakurdas Papers (1946); Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

Item 2

Reviewing the action taken on the recommendations made in the last meeting, the Council was informed that:

- (i) bread prepared from wheat flour of 85% extraction was made available in the Bombay and Bombay Suburban District ration area with effect from 6th January 1946,
- (ii) that the question of fixing the rates of *khara* biscuits was being examined by the Controller of Rationing and would be referred to the Standing Committee of the Food Advisory Council at its next meeting,
- (iii) that as desired by the Council, a letter had been addressed to the Bombay Municipal Corporation regarding tightening up of inspection of bakeries, and
- (iv) that the proposal to prohibit the service of eggs and egg dishes in catering establishments after 10 a.m. was under Government's consideration.

Item 3

The Chairman reviewed the food position in the City.

Item 4

The Chairman reviewed the food position in the Province.

3. Central Legislative Assembly Discussion on Food Shortages

Extracts from a news report, 'India faces food shortage threat'. *Statesman*, 31 January 1946.

New Delhi, Wednesday. Elected MLA's listened in critical mood this morning to a Government statement on the anticipated food shortage in India. The causes of present anxiety are the devastating cyclone in the Godavari-Kistna delta in October and the failure of the northeast monsoon in south India and of winter rains in the UP and northwestern India up till now.

The Acting Food Secretary Mr B.R. Sen told the Assembly that Sir Robert Hutchings' mission to the Combined Food Board at Washington was not likely to result in India's getting even the minimum quantities of food grains she needed. The Government were, therefore, considering steps to persuade the Board to reopen and reconsider the whole case of allocations for 1946.

In India, he said, the Government contemplated (1) the introduction and extension of some form of monopoly procurement so that in the Punjab, Sind, the UP and Bihar especially, larger quantities of food grains might be procured; (2) an extension of rationing, particularly in

deficit provinces, and revision of ration scales on an all-India basis; (3) maintenance of price control, a difficult step in a year of scarcity and possibly requiring such measures as requisitioning of stocks where no Government monopoly existed.

When Mr Sen submitted an official motion that the food situation be taken into consideration, Sir Zia Uddin Ahmed (Muslim League) rose and summarily moved that the Food Department be abolished. For the Congress, Mr M.R. Masani proposed that the Assembly record dissatisfaction at Government's failure to import sufficient food grains and apprehension that large sections of people may be faced with starvation, especially in south and west India.

The European Group, through Mr C.P. Lawson, suggested that UNO be urged to make food grains available in sufficient quantities to prevent a repetition of the 1943 disaster....

Sir Cowasjee Jehangir indicted the Food Department's lack of control over surplus provinces, and feared that even now they would not put their surpluses at the Central Government's disposal. Desperate remedies were required, and perhaps these provinces would behave better if Bombay kept the distribution of its cloth in its own hands as a bargaining counter. Mr Sarat Bose found the Combined Food Board's attitude a sad commentary on India's international status. The debate will be continued tomorrow....

4. Lucknow Hunger-march

News report, 'Hunger-march by 50,000 Lucknow citizens'. *Hindustan Times*, 3 February 1946.

Lucknow, February 2. A spectacular hunger-march, protesting against the reduction in wheat ration by 50 per cent, was organised today in Lucknow. A procession of about 50,000 persons carrying Congress, League, Communist and Hindu Sabha flags and shouting "Down with rationing" and "Hindus and Muslims unite", paraded the principal streets of the city and held a demonstration in front of the Civil Secretariat. A few members of the procession carried half chapatis and tattered clothes demonstrating "the consequences of the cloth and food policy of an alien Government".

The procession, which was closely followed by lorries of armed police, terminated at Aminudaulla Park where a meeting was held, Mr C.B. Gupta presiding.

Pandit Govind Ballabh Pant, ex-Premier, UP, addressing the meeting said that the present food and cloth scarcity in the country was the result of the incompetent administration of a foreign government which was determined to emasculate the Indian people. The vitality of Indians was already at its lowest ebb, and a further reduction in rationing would bring them nearer to their doom. The labour class would find the latest rationing quota utterly insufficient.

The meeting passed a resolution strongly criticising the rationing policy of the UP Government and emphasised that a national and popular government alone could lay down an effective policy and provide food and other necessities of life to the people.—API.

5. Shortage of Rice in Madras Province

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Madras Province for the first half of February 1946. Fortnightly Reports; Public (General) Department, Government of Madras (1946); Tamil Nadu State Archives.

In view of the grave shortage of rice in the Province, the Government have decided to effect a reduction in the scale of food rations from 1 lb per head per day to 12 oz per head per day

in all the statutorily rationed areas in the Province with effect from the week commencing 17th February 1946. Informal rationing is also being introduced throughout the Province. Card-holders will be permitted to take delivery of the 12 oz rations either wholly in wheat, or in rice, or in millets; or partially in all three. Millets have been declared as a rationed article in the rationed areas in the city of Madras, in the Districts of Tanjore, Chingleput, Kistna, the Guntur, Chirala, Perala and Tenali. Rationing commenced in these places from 10th February 1946. The Central Rationing Advisory Committee for the Madras suburban area has been reconstituted for a further period of one year from 20th January 1946.

There has been practically no rain anywhere in the Province. Reports as to crop forecasts as regards both dry and wet crops in unirrigated areas throughout the Presidency remained consistently depressing. The District Board Expansion Works in the famine areas of Anantapur and Bellary are attracting labourers; the Collector of Bellary reports that his works are expanding in spite of the agitation against them that was mentioned in the last report. Measures of relief are being taken in the Kollegal area of Coimbatore District.

6. Viceroy Recommends Cut in Cereal Ration in Bombay Province

Extracts from minutes of a meeting held on 20 February 1946 by the Food Advisory Council, Finance (Supply) Department, Government of Bombay. File No. 294; Purshotamdas Thakurdas Papers (1946); Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

Item 2

Reviewing the action taken on the recommendations made at its previous meetings, the Council was informed that the question of prohibiting the sale or service of eggs or egg dishes by establishments after 10 a.m. had been carefully considered. In the light of the working of the order prescribing two poultry-less days, it seemed improbable that the proposed prohibition would help in bringing down prices of eggs or in maintaining supplies at the existing level. It had been decided therefore that the recommendation should not be given effect to and that every endeavour should be made to increase supplies of eggs to the City.

Item 3

Reviewing the food position in the Province, the Chairman informed the Council that in view of the broadcast by HE the Viceroy, instructing Provincial Governments to reduce cereal rations, the cereal basic ration had to be reduced from 16 to 12 oz per head per day and the heavy manual labour ration from 8 to 4 oz throughout the Province. This cut would be enforced from the 21st February 1946.

After some discussion on food position generally the Council endorsed the following recommendations made by the Provincial Food and Commodity Advisory Board on 20th February 1946:

"This Board while approving the action of the Government of Bombay in complying with His Excellency the Viceroy's direction for an emergency reduction of the cereal ration in the Province, recommends to the Government of Bombay that the ration should be restored as soon as prospects of supply justify it.

This Board recommends that the Government of Bombay make the strongest possible representation to the Government of India at the injustice of the Government of Bombay

having to reduce the cereal ration unless and until all provinces have introduced rationing and procurement on the same scale and with the same strictness as Bombay province; that in particular the Government of Bombay should stress the indignation caused by the fact that in some areas the ration even now does not extend to all main cereals; the rationing is not extended beyond a few major places and monopoly procurement is not in force; further that until such areas come into line with the clear necessities of the country's needs, the Government of Bombay should prohibit the export to such areas of such of Bombay's main products as may be decided."

The Council made the following further recommendations:

(1) Government should make far greater efforts to grow more foodgrains by extending the agricultural department.

(2) The cut in the ration as applied to the mill labourers should start from 24th February 1946.

(3) It was stated that 4 lakhs tons of groundnut were allotted to the Food Ministry to be exported out of India. Of this 2 lakhs tons had already been exported. The Council recommended that the Government of India should be requested not to allow the export of the balance of the quota.

(4) If possible, Government should bring under control all pulses and if practicable ration them.

7. Destitutes in Calcutta

News report, 'Grim shadows of famine in Bengal'. *Free Press Journal*, 14 March 1946.

Calcutta, March 13. Destitutes are pouring in into Calcutta from neighbouring districts as well as from neighbouring provinces.

About 200 destitutes were removed from the streets of Calcutta from February 20 to March 3. Of them, 121 were Bengalees hailing from 24-Parganas, Howrah and Midnapur and the rest from Bihar, Madras, Orissa, UP and the CP.

Steps are being taken since February 20 to collect and find accommodation for these destitutes in destitute homes. Instructions have also been given to the district authorities of Midnapur, 24-Parganas and Howrah to keep a close watch on and take such steps as possible to check any drift to Calcutta.— UP.

8. Congress Unwilling to Join Food Council Proposed by Viceroy

Extracts from news report, 'New Food Council plan rejected by Congress'. *Statesman*, 15 March 1946.

Bombay, March 14. The Congress has declined to join a food committee with full plenary powers, consisting of Lord Wavell, Mr Gandhi, Mr Jinnah and the Nawab of Bhopal, to deal with the impending food crisis, in the absence of a popular Government at the Centre, writes the political correspondent of the Associated Press of India. This decision of the Congress has been conveyed to the Viceroy through his Private Secretary, Mr Abell, who saw Mr Gandhi last night.

The Viceroy's first proposal was to have a committee of 14, but on receipt of the Congress President's telegram that the Working Committee was not in favour of joining this committee, Lord Wavell sent his Private Secretary, Mr Abell, with a new proposal suggesting a committee of four, with plenary powers. This proposal also was rejected by the Working Committee.

A Congress spokesman pointed out tonight the while the Congress was fully prepared to do everything in its power to help the Government to tide over the food crisis, it could not agree to join a food committee even though it had plenary powers, unless there was a change in the Government at the Centre with People's representatives at the helm of affairs. "The proposed advisory committee, however eminent it may be, cannot make much headway," the spokesman pointed out, "until and unless the Government machinery under which it has to work is changed". No ad hoc committee, however strong and powerful, "can deliver the goods under the present setup of the Government in India and the only manner of tackling the food crisis is to hasten the reconstruction of the Government at the Centre on a broad basis which was promised in the British Government's declaration of September last." ...

The committee has suggested ways and means of increasing food grain production in the country and has called upon all Congress organisations to help in preserving the existing food supplies and increasing them in all possible ways. The subcommittee has also suggested that the Government of India should immediately discourage the cultivation of cash crops such as Virginia tobacco, cotton, etc., and make it compulsory for every holder of land to devote 75 to 80 per cent of his holdings to the growing of food grains. The subcommittee has also suggested improved methods of production and distribution.---API.

9. Political Capital Made Out of Ration Cuts in Madras Province

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Madras Province for the first half of January 1946. File No. 18/3/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

There has been practically no rainfall this fortnight also and complete or partial failure of crops is reported from many areas. In Salem, wells are drying and crops cultivated under them are reported to be withering. In Ramnad there has been a complete failure of crops raised under rain-fed tanks. In Tinnevely also crops in rain-fed areas have largely withered and the water level in the Papanasam reservoir has fallen from 89 feet on 23rd February 1946 to 81 feet on 9th March 1946. In Nellore the outturn of the late sown paddy crop is very much below the normal, while in some taluks, the main cholam crop has been almost completely lost and the Collector thinks it may be necessary to start famine works to provide employment for agricultural labourers. In South Arcot the harvest of the long-term paddy now in progress has yielded poor results, while crops raised later in some areas are expected to perish completely.

The Government scheme of digging wells mentioned in my last report has been extended now to a number of other districts and it is hoped that it will be well under way in the next few weeks. There is still a fair amount of discontent over the cut in rations and more irresponsible speakers, amongst both Communists and Congressmen, have been trying to make electioneering capital out of this. The riots at Conjeevaram and Cheyyar have specially demonstrated the necessity for adequate Government publicity and a Public Relations Section has been recently set up in the Food Department, a number of propaganda vans belonging to the old Field Publicity Organisation having been transferred to it.

A few Punjabis started a hunger strike in Rajahmundry Jail to protest against the reduced rations. The other prisoners did not join in and the hunger strike did not last long.

Other measures taken by the Government this fortnight include an increased subsidy for imported wheat, the amount working out to nearly eight lakhs. Rationing of bread, and wheat

products like wheat flour and sooji [semolina], is to be introduced from 24th April 1946, the ration to form part of the ordinary foodgrains ration.

In order also to preserve an adequate balance, Collectors have been instructed to build up as far as possible stocks of both boiled rice and raw rice in towns, so that when stocks are in short supply they may be eked out by issuing an equal proportion of both kinds. This would avoid the necessity for any area to switch over to either boiled or raw rice altogether for a considerable period at a stretch.

The average prices of all food-grains except *chulam* remained stationary. The cost of living index for working-classes in Madras City was 228 for the week ending 9th March 1946, while in the mufassal it varied from 234 at Bellary to 266 at Ellore.

10. Government Measures to Protect Vulnerable Groups in South India

Extracts from the minutes of a conference held by the Food Department, Government of India, at New Delhi on 19 March 1946. File No. 357 (Reel No. 23); All India Women's Congress Papers (1946); Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

Present

1. Mr B.R. Sen, CIE, ICS, Secretary, Food Dept, Govt of India.
2. Mr Vishnu Sahay, ICS, Director General, Food Dept, Govt of India.
3. Major Gen. R. Hay, CIE, IMS, Director General, IMS, Health Department, Govt of India.
4. Lt Col C.R. Bozman, OBE, IMS, Public Health Commissioner Health Dept, Govt of India.
5. Mr W.H. Kirby, OBE, Rationing Adviser, Food Dept, Govt of India.
6. Mr F.W.P. Marar, OBE, ICS, Joint Secretary, Food Dept, Govt of India.
7. Mrs T.S. Pillay, Under Secretary, Food Dept, Govt of India.
8. Dr K. Mitra, MBE, Dy Director of Nutrition, Food Dept, Govt of India.
9. Mr C.N. Narasimham, MBE, ICS, Addl Dy Secretary, Food Dept, Govt of Madras.
10. Mr K. Srinivasan, MCS, Addl Director of Food, Mysore Govt
11. Mr P.V. George, Nutrition Officer, Bombay.
12. Dr R.E. Dadachanji, Nutrition Officer, Bombay.
13. Miss J.E. Copeland, Reference Officer, Publications Division, Information and Arts Dept, Govt of India.
14. Mrs Mary Elwin, WVS (I), HQ.
15. Mr Stephen D. Lee, Friends' Service Unit.
16. Mr Leslie Gwilt, MLA (Central).
17. Mr Balwant Singh Puri, Indian Red Cross Society, Delhi.
18. Swami Gangeshananda, Ramakrishna Mission, New Delhi.
19. Mr Dharam Chand Saramji, Marwari Relief Society, Calcutta.
20. Mrs Parijatham Naidu, Commandant, Indian Women's Civil Corps, Madras.
21. Mr A.R. Vyas, Information Officer, Food Dept, Govt of India.

1. At the outset Mr B.R. Sen thanked the delegates for having attended the Conference and at such short notice.

2. The main subject for discussion was, he said the special measures to be taken to protect the vulnerable groups in the scarcity areas of South India. Owing to failure of NE and SW Monsoons there is a grave food deficit in India in 1946—roughly 6 million tons or 10 per cent of India's requirements. If an even distribution of the available foodgrains was possible, the deficit would not have been felt and there would not have been any threat of scarcity or famine, but under the circumstances prevailing in India such an even distribution is not possible. In some areas the shortage will be more than in others. The areas most affected by the scarcity form a composite stretch, and include 5 or 6 districts in Bombay, 6 or 7 districts in Madras and one part of Mysore.

3. Mr Sen continued, we should meet this deficit in two ways by imports and by austerity. For the first we have sent a delegation to the UK and USA and although we are expecting some quantity from these places, it may not be sufficient to meet the entire deficit. The only other way is to conserve grain in India as far as possible. But in spite of whatever efforts we may take, there will still remain a deficit of 3 to 4 million tons. To meet this people should reduce their consumption,—and here the question to how to protect the vulnerable groups arises.

4. Scarcity conditions will become acute from May onwards in Southern India till the next harvest, i.e., Sept. in Madras and Oct./Nov. in Bombay. The Bengal Famine of 1943 occurred during the same period, but we were not then prepared to meet the crisis, with the result that it was a long time before we got relief measures really started. Such delay should not recur this time and we must take precautions beforehand. We have barely two months left to make the necessary preparations.

5. One of the ways of protecting the vulnerable groups is by distribution of milk —(the definition of 'Vulnerable Group' would be dealt with by Col Rozman). The distribution of milk in Bengal on a large scale was started in 1944 and is being continued. Such distribution can be done only through milk distributing centres. The advice of this Conference, said Mr Sen, was required on this subject.

6. Lt Col Bozman, said that the term 'Vulnerable Groups' in India includes nursing and expectant mothers, infants up to 2-3 yrs, and children up to 18 years, namely adolescents. We must lay down some sort of priority to deal with each class. The child up to 3 or 4 years requires the first priority, then come nursing or expectant mothers,—nursing mothers have a higher claim than expectant mothers —and last come the adolescents....

15. Mr Balwant Singh Puri said that the Indian Red Cross undertook distribution of milk in 1943 famine in Bengal in about 2000 centres from Sept. 1943 to Dec. 1945 and the Bengal Govt wished this scheme to continue till Mar. 1947. In Cochin and Travancore also they distributed milk—150 tons in Cochin and 318 tons in Malabar (352 centres). The Indian Red Cross was prepared in the present emergency to help as they did in 1943.

16. Mr Narasimham said that the Madras Govt would gladly take the help of the Indian Red Cross and others for distribution, but as regards areas and quantity they would like to have the freedom of choice. Secretary said that the scheme should be worked out by the Provincial and State Governments concerned....

18. Swami Gangeshananda of the Ramakrishna Mission said that the Govt always left out villages where people died in large numbers. Dr Dadachanji said that they are extending the scheme to the villages also. Mr Puri said that the Indian Red Cross distributed milk in rural parts in Bengal. Swami Gangeshananda said that the Govt of India should be vigilant about the distribution by Provincial Govts. Mr Kirby said that the Govt of India had placed all emphasis on safeguarding the affected rural areas. Dr Dadachanji said that Bombay Govt's

policy was to see that milk was being drunk where it was distributed and not taken home, or disposed of elsewhere.

19. Dr George said that the distribution of milk in Malabar was not satisfactory as it did not reach the people for whom it was intended.

20. Regarding Emergency Feeding Centres, Mr Narasimham of Madras Govt said that they had not started such centres, but that they were getting ready. In Vizagapatam District they had kitchens—such kitchens were in Malabar in 1943. The entire Province of Madras was, he said, under rationing. In addition to the 12 oz of foodgrains ration they were making tapioca available.

21. Mr Srinivasan of Mysore said that they had already opened kitchens where *jowar* [barley], groundnuts and dried fish were being used. To a question whether a knowledge of cooking and consuming such substitute diets was being disseminated, Mrs Naidu said that her organisation was doing this, and that they also carried out house to house propaganda.

23. Secretary said that they should work out what sort of extra foods should be distributed if in some areas there is a ration of only 8 ozs cereal per head....

24. Secretary said that the expected cereal imports will be predominantly wheat and enquired whether any propaganda was required to popularise wheat without wasting it, in the rice-eating areas. Mr Narasimham said that they had done such propaganda previously by selling wheat at reduced prices and the offtake then increased, but when the wheat supply became less, the subsidy and publicity were taken off and the offtake declined....

26. Mr Narasimham said that they were making groundnuts available at ration shops. Dr George said that the main difficulty was regarding quality and the amount of sand and stones in the groundnut cake. Dr Mitra said that the groundnuts should firstly be handpicked, though it would increase the cost of production....

27. Regarding a possible source of obtaining increased calories, Dr Mitra said that *gurh* [unrefined sugar] can be prepared from sweet toddy and this has sugar value, and that Bombay Government was conducting experiments with this commodity....

28. Decisions

- (I) Provisional Governments will draw up their schemes on the basis of the general principles laid down by the Centre and they will seek the assistance of the various voluntary organisations willing to help.
- (II) Milk distribution should be undertaken for protecting the vulnerable classes. Provinces and States should go into this question without further delay and place firm demands for milk powder on the Food Department.... Then the Government of India will make every endeavour to get more imports....

11. Steps Taken by Bombay Government to Ameliorate Food Shortages

Extracts from minutes of a meeting held on 20 March 1946 by the Food Advisory Council, Finance (Supply) Department, Government of Bombay. File No. 294; Purshotamdas Thakurdas Papers (1946); Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

... The cut in the ration as applied to the mill labourers started from 24th February 1946;

4. The Government of India has suspended export of the balance of the quota of groundnut out of India; and

5. It had already been decided to procure quotas of pulses from other provinces on Government account and to arrange for distribution through ration shops as soon as sufficient stocks had been purchased....

The Chairman informed the Council of the progress of the schemes to increase the supply of fish to the City....

It was proposed to supply smoked fish and salted fish in the scarcity areas....

12. Cultural Workers' Committee for Fighting Famine

Extracts from an article, 'Call for united fight for bread and freedom'. *People's Age*, 24 March 1946.

Prominent writers, journalists, cultural workers, painters, photo-artists, film artists, doctors, professors and intellectual workers of Bombay have come together and formed a Cultural Workers' Committee for Fighting Famine.

The members of the Committee have issued the following Manifesto on the famine situation in the country. The Manifesto was passed at a representative meeting of the cultural and intellectual workers of Bombay held on March 3, 1946.

The Committee will help and cooperate with all other organisations set up to fight the present food scarcity and famine irrespective of any communal or political considerations, but will not attach itself to any single organisation, and will in all circumstances retain its open, independent and nonpartisan character.

The Committee is organising trips of writers, journalists, artists and others to some of the affected areas in Maharashtra. The results of these periodical trips and surveys will be released to the Press in the form of articles, reportages, photographs, sketches, paintings, etc.

The Committee will endeavor to prepare short documents also with the help of the mobile units of the Indian People's Theatre Association.

It will stage shows to raise funds for helping relief committees and specific, affected areas.

The Office of the Committee has been set up at 41 Queen's Road, Bombay 2.

For any suggestions, information, help, etc., please write to the Honorary Secretaries at the above address.

The list of over 150 cultural workers who have already signed the Manifesto includes:

Writers and journalists like—Krishan Chander, Mulkraj Anand, K.A. Abbas, R.A. Bakoolesh, S.A. Sabavala, Mahender Nath, Sajjad Zaheer, Ismat Shahid Latif, Shahid Latif, Phiroze Mistry, Anil De Silva, Ramesh C. Sinha, Romesh Thapar;

Poets like Ali Sardar Jafri, Swapnasth, Nazar Hyderabad;

Film artistes like Prithviraj, Jairaj, K.L. Sahgal, David;

Dancers and actors like Uzra Begum (Prithvi theatre), K.M. Phansalkar, Balraj Sahni, Damyanti Sahni, Zohra Segal, Kameshwar Segal, Hameed Butt, Sombhu Mitra, Leela Jariwala;

Cultural and social workers like V.P. Sathe, Mrs D.R.D. Wadia, Mrs Romesh Thapar, Shyam; Painters like Chittoprasad, Beatriz M. Bragansa and Gore;

Photo artists like D.R.D. Wadia and Sunil Janah;

Doctors like R. Naidu; etc.

The following well-known writers of Bengal have also associated themselves with the Committee and have signed its Manifesto;

Tarashanker Benerjee, Sailajanand Mukherjee, Bishnu De, Manik Banerjee, Hiran Mukherjee, Hiran K. Sanyal, Gopal Halder, Jyotindra Moitra, Subhas Mukherjee, Bimal Ghose, Niren Roy and Prof. Nihar Sarker....

13. Demonstrations in the Punjab Against Food Hoarders

Extracts from an article, 'Food battle in Punjab towns and villages'. *People's Age*, 31 March 1946.

... In Ludhiana, the Civil Supply Officer stopped the sale of wheat, pending investigations regarding the amount of stock held by each dealer! The dealers promptly stopped selling *atta* [flour] also— with the result that for two to three days there was starvation among the poor.

Joint Citizens' Committee Gets Results

On the 21st February, news came that in Kaiserganj *mandi* [market] 400 bags of wheat were lying waiting to be exported from the city. Immediately a procession of 3000 workers and women marched to the spot. They demanded the distribution of the grain, but the officials refused and instead called in *lathi* Police. The people were determined to secure the grain—Police or no Police. There was every possibility of a clash. At this moment, Congress and Communist leaders reached the spot, met the Deputy Commissioner and made him distribute ten bags of grain there and then.

Till now, Congress and League leaders had been meeting the authorities separately to place before them the grievances of the people with regard to food. But now a joint Committee representing Congress, League, Ahrars, and Communists has been formed, public meetings held and a huge women's procession demonstrated in front of the Civil Supply Office.

The result of all this has been that the Deputy Commissioner has climbed down, opened up a number of depots, promised to supply wholesale *atta*, and handed over the distribution of ration cards to the Citizens' Committee. The people having gained confidence through this victory are now agitating for an increase of the ration from 6 chattaks to 8 chattaks per head per day.

Lathi Charge and Arrests

In Hoshiarpur, on the 27th of February, a stirring procession of 1500 hungry people led by the Communist Party marched round the city and demonstrated in front of the grain depots, all of which had been 'reserved' for Government servants by a fantastic edict passed a few days earlier.

The procession marched to a hoarder's shop where 500 bags of wheat were surrounded by a crowd of women. With the Police and the Additional District Magistrate looking on, not daring to stop them, the crowd peacefully sold a large portion of the wheat at controlled rates. The Police threatened to lathi-charge but dared not. Finally the Magistrate arrested the Communist leaders, Thakar Waryam Singh and Attah Rakha Chaman.

But Hoshiarpur's citizens, conscious of their new strength, were not prepared to tolerate Police repression. Women and girls from every part of the city thronged to the Police Station demanding the release of the leaders. From another side, thousands of citizens marched on the Police Station. The Police lathi-charged and arrested four more Communist leaders; Bhagsingh Sajjan, Piara Singh Jandal, Niaz Mohammad and Ved Prakash.

But the people refused to move, squatting firmly in front of the Police Station. Finally the Deputy Commissioner promised that he would release all the arrested persons, and at the request of the local Congress leaders, the crowd dispersed....

14. Strikes in Calcutta Against the Ration Cuts

Extracts from a news report, 'One and a half lakh workers strike'. *People's Age*, 31 March 1946.

Calcutta, March 23. The working-class of Calcutta's industrial belt in Barrackpore, Hooghly and Howrah including more than 20,000 coal miners of Asansol and Raniganj have gone on strike protesting against the cut in ration that has come into operation throughout Bengal from the 18th March. The number of workers involved in the strike action comes to nearly one lakh and a half.

The strike began from the 20th March and spread rapidly from mill to mill. At the time of writing, the strikers are fighting unitedly and courageously in spite of all provocative attempts by the Police, and the disruptive tactics of the Congress Labour candidates.

The electric supply workers of Calcutta have refused to buy any ration until the cut in ration is cancelled. The railway workers in Kancharapara have gone on a stay-in strike....

15. Drought and Hoarding Cause Severe Food Shortages in Bengal

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Bengal for the second half of March 1946. File No. 18/3/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Economic and Agrarian

A fall in the wages of agricultural labourers has been reported from some areas but there is no indication of unemployment yet. On the contrary there is a temporary shortage of agricultural labour in some areas. Relief works in the district of Bankura are continuing and over 2,80,000 persons were employed there during the fortnight. It is reported that distress is gradually increasing in some areas and relief work will be necessary.

The panic caused by the reports of all-India food shortage is subsiding slowly. Prices in some districts are showing a downward trend but they are still above the Government purchasing rates at most of the centers. Imports into the market continue to be poorer than usual at this time of the year. The rate of Government procurement declined further during the period under review. During the fortnight from 9th to 24th March procurement amounted to 23,000 tons as against about 41,000 tons in the preceding fortnight. Most districts report the hoarding of rice and paddy; the reasons are on the one hand panic and on the other hand the hope that the price of rice and paddy will rise. In the two districts of Bankura and Birbhum 53 cultivators between them are reported to have hoarded 31,600 maunds of paddy. The surreptitious traffic of paddy from Bengal into Bihar continues. Eighteen cases have been started against persons exporting grain in this way and measures to prevent this export have been intensified.

The Provincial average price of rice stood at Rs 13-7-0 against Rs 13-4-0 in the previous fortnight. The average prices in the surplus, deficit and self-sufficient districts have increased by 1 anna, 5 annas and 4 annas respectively.

Complaints about scarcity of cloth, mustard oil and sugar continue as usual.

There was no rain except in some parts of East Bengal. The drought has affected the outturn of *rabi* crops and delayed the sowing of *aus*, paddy and *jute*.

Miscellaneous

In view of the drastic cut of 13 per cent in the quota of sugar to Bengal, it has been decided to reduce the scale of ration in Calcutta and other rationed areas from 8 ounces per head per week to 6 ounces per head per week. Increase in the registration of cards in the Calcutta rationed area still continues. Fresh arrangements are being made for a drive to eliminate fictitious cards.

Relief and rehabilitation operations are continuing as usual. One hundred and seventy-five destitutes were picked up from the streets of Calcutta as against 203 during the previous fortnight.

16. Starvation Deaths on the Streets of Calcutta

Extracts from a news report, 'Calcutta hunger deaths'. *Hindustan Times*, 7 April 1946.

Calcutta, April 5. Some alarm has been caused by a statement in the press that of the 23 unidentified bodies picked up from Calcutta streets during the week ended March 30 five died of starvation, says a Bengal Government press note. This information was not issued by the Government and appears to have been the result of considerable misunderstanding.

The actual deaths due to starvation during the week were two. Of the deaths reported as due to starvation, four have now been ascertained to be bodies cremated on the certificate of the hospital a considerable time after death.

Of the 23 persons, 18 are those of patients without known addresses who died in hospitals, while the remaining five are stated to be bodies disposed of under the orders of the police, about which further inquiry is being made.

Relief Measures

Indicating the lines on which the problem is being dealt with, the Government state that ample accommodation is available in destitute camps in Calcutta which have been kept in existence since 1943 and steps to remove destitutes from the streets to these camps have been resumed. At the same time preventive measures are afoot in the two districts from which destitutes have begun to drift in, the 24 Parganas and Howrah, to arrest this flow both by the provision of home relief and employment on relief in the district at the point where distress originates and by opening destitute camps to accommodate persons who have left their villages and intercept them, so far as possible on the way to Calcutta.—API.

17. Threat of Famine Because of India's War Effort

News report, 'India starves because she joined Britain's war'. *Free Press Journal*, 9 April 1946

Madras, April 8. "The threat of famine in India marks the end of colonial economy," said Sir S.V. Ramamurthy, Adviser to the Governor of Madras in a broadcast speech tonight from the AIR, Madras, giving an account of the Indian Food Delegation, of which he was a member, to the Combined Food Board at Washington.

Sir Ramamurthy said: "At Washington we pointed out that India came to America as a paying patient, and not as an old age pensioner, that her aliment was due to the help she had rendered to the Allies and that the food which India could purchase would be treated like medicine in a graduated bottle and not thrown into a leaky bucket as would be the case with countries which had no well-organised food administration."

"We also said that if there was a serious famine again in India, the 'One World' of which America would be a head would be broken before it was built."

Sir Ramamurthy added: "the threat of famine in India and Asia generally raised certain fundamental issues. A philosophy under which the owner and cultivator of land has a right only to a reasonable return for his ownership and labour and the food produced is the property of the community needs to be applied to the world."

"The earth is the heritage of all men. A few races have no right to mark off a large part of the earth of [for] themselves and live in plenty while the many nations starve."

"Gratitude was no doubt often for the future but unless it was shown for the past, how could help for the future be expected?" asked Sir Ramamurthy, commenting on the food position in Germany and Japan which were getting a ration of 1500 and 2000 calories respectively. It is recalled that the ration in India is about 1000 calories.

Not Begging

Sir Ramamurthy went on to say: "If there was famine in India. It would not be the governments of provinces and of India that would be accused this time as they were in the Bengal famine."

"India had given total help in a total war and it was not gratitude on the part of the Allies to treat India which had helped them to victory in the same way as enemy countries".

"We claimed that the major part of Siamese rice should be supplied to India which had borne the brunt of the war in South East Asia and without whose assistance Siam could not have been conquered or Malaya recovered and kept. After a struggle, our allocation was raised to just over half the available supply from Siam".

"We also represented that we needed at least half a million tons of wheat to be made up by the United Kingdom whether from the stock that they kept or otherwise. It does not appear that this claim has been conceded."

Anxious, Not Desperate

Sir Ramamurthy said: "There is need to establish 'One World' in the hearts of men if there is to be 'One World' in the affairs of men. The train of humanity cannot run as one with first class tickets for 3000 calories and more and third class tickets hardly for 1000 calories."

"Our position remains anxious but not desperate, we have secured a considerable portion of our demands but not all."

"The imports which we are to secure enable us to keep off famine but at a low level of ration. It needs all the latent ability of the people and the Government of India to rise to the emergency and see that even with the restricted help of the world and Empire, India is enabled to survive this year. It will be touch and go, but it can be done with the cooperation of all." —API.

18. Supply of Food Grains Getting Worse in Bombay Province

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Bombay Province for the first half of April 1946. File No. 18/4/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Price Control and Food Position

The supply position of food grains in the Province, as previously reported, is steadily getting worse and there is no hope of improvement unless movements against quotas under Basic

Plan are expedited and compensatory allotments are sanctioned to replace defaults. The up-to-date defaults against Basic Plan quotas are, Rice 1608 tons, Wheat 4057 tons, Millets 88,750 tons and Maize 5000 tons, or in all 99,235 tons. The volume of arrivals in the scarcity areas, especially Satara and Belgaum, is falling short of requirements, necessitating frequent changes in sources of supplies. Receipts of rice in the Province are fairly satisfactory but those of wheat and millets show no improvement.

Government of India has reported reduction in the import quota of wheat from 30,000 tons to 25,000 tons for the months of April. This reduction is likely to upset the wheat distribution programme which was drawn up by this Government on the assumption that 30,000 tons wheat would be received during the month of April. If the wheat quota for the month of April is reduced, as proposed, it would not be possible to meet from the present stocks and the stocks in sight, even the immediate needs of Bombay City, where owing to the discontinuance of millets the pressure on wheat has increased and also of districts which are pressing for urgent supply of wheat.

In order to ward off discontent among railway workers in Ahmedabad, Panch Mahals, and Thana, it was necessary to supply some wheat to these areas from stocks of wheat in Bombay City which are declining to the danger line.

The total purchases of cereal food grains in the Province from the beginning of the crop year, i.e., 4th November 1945 up to 30th March 1946 are 2,76,244 tons. The corresponding figure for the last year is 3,74,532 tons.

19. H.K. Mehtab's Solution for the Oriyan Food Problem

Extracts from an article, 'Will crop failure mean another famine in Orissa?' *People's Age*, 21 April 1946.

Famine in Orissa resulted in 35,000 deaths in 1943, and nearly 30,000 in 1944. The Famine Enquiry Committee and the Director of Health of the Government of Orissa both admitted that these deaths were due to want of food and malnutrition.

Sjt Harekrishna Mehtab, the new Congress Premier, in a speech at Patia in the second week of February, rightly declared that "the last famine was not due to drought or natural calamity, but was purely a case of inefficiency on the part of the Government."

Famine has indeed become almost chronic in Orissa, and the common people are looking forward expectantly for a really effective food policy from the newly-installed Congress Ministry.

Is Orissa a Surplus Province?

The biggest handicap the Ministry faces is the legacy it has received from the previous Parlakimedi Ministry and the more recent Section 93 regime.

Under these Governments, through an artificial playing-about with figures, Orissa was declared 'a surplus Province' for the purposes of the Basic Plan of the Government of India. (The Gregory Report says that Orissa is normally a surplus Province to the extent of 1.82 lakh tons).

Calculations were made on the basis of the fact that Orissa exported rice in the pre-control days to the neighboring Provinces of Bengal, Bihar and Madras.

What was completely ignored was that it was because of the poverty of the Oriyas that they were forced to export their grain in order to secure the bare necessities of life—at the expense of their stomachs.

On the basis, then, of this artificially created surplus, the Government of India fixes an export quota for Orissa every year. And for this year, immediately before the new Ministry took office, the Governor entered into an agreement with the Central Government to export 16 lakh maunds of rice.

Announcing this at a conference of the leaders of political parties, the Governor declared that there was "no cause for alarm". In fact, he said "we face the present crisis from a position in which our local situation can be described as well up to average."

Real Extent of Crop Failure

This statement came in striking contrast to facts known to the whole Province. A Government communique, dated Feb. 21 had itself admitted that there had been a failure of crops almost throughout the whole of the Province, with the exception of Puri district. The communique had, however, added the remarkable conclusion that despite this failure, the production would be "practically the same as last year's!" ...

Stop Exports—End Rationing

... So far only two towns—Cuttack and Berhampore—are rationed. Here too, the first step towards artificially creating a 'surplus' has been to cut the ration from eight chattaks to six. What this means to the poverty-stricken Oriya, who cannot purchase anything to supplement his rice diet, is obvious. Already Orissa has the highest incidence in India of malnutrition diseases like leprosy. The ration-cut will only help to bring more diseases and increase the death rate.

What is necessary is not a cut in the ration, but an extension of rationing and the setting up of control and subsidised grain shops in every urban and deficit rural area. There are large areas where the poor peasants, artisans and agricultural labourers have to purchase their food for six to nine months of the year and these must be provided with subsidised grain....

Against Rice Smuggling

The new Ministry must, therefore, as its first task, make a categorical declaration that it is not prepared to allow any exports under the Basic Plan, until and unless it first makes adequate arrangements to feed its own people and to provide them against emergencies.

Once this declaration has been made, the Ministry must take rigorous steps to stop the smuggling of rice out of Orissa. Under the previous corrupt administrations, smuggling had become a normal feature.

In February, Mrs Malati Chowdhry, the President of the Cuttack District Congress Committee, alleged that the notorious firm of Ispahani was taking away rice from the Dhenkanal State to the neighboring Province of Bengal, where higher prices offered a tempting bait to the profiteer. This smuggling from the tiny Indian States of Orissa cannot be checked by the Provincial administration, because officially it has no jurisdiction over these States.

This is another matter where the Congress Ministry must immediately act. The Provincial Government must have the right to control exports from these small States, most of which are surplus areas. A common pool of all the produce of the Province and the States must be made, and exports and distribution must be strictly controlled.

Smuggling is, however, taking place from Orissa Province as well. Press reports indicate that rice is trickling out from Balasore district. The previous administrations, bureaucrat-ridden as they were, were incapable of fighting smuggling. But the Congress Ministry can root out this corrupt practice with the aid of the people.

Sjt Mehtab's Remedy: Increase Rice Prices!

Unfortunately, however, Sjt Harekrishna Mehtab, the Congress Premier, seems to have an idea that smuggling can be stopped by another method.

Over two months ago, Sjt Mehtab in an interview with the Governor, came out with the demand that rice prices should be increased in Orissa and brought at level with Bengal and other neighboring Provinces.

This was Sjt Mehtab's way to avoid smuggling—for then, in his opinion, there would be no incentive for it.

The Congress leader gave two the more 'reasons' for his proposed increase in the price level:

First, Sjt Mehtab declared [a large] per cent of the people of Orissa produce rice and do not have to purchase it. Thus the rise in price will benefit the vast majority of the people.

The second argument advanced was that Orissa, being a rice-exporting Province, would lose if the rice price remained low, because the prices of the necessities of life which it secures in exchange have gone up.

These arguments came as a shock to the mass of Oriyas. It true that industrial labour and middle-class employees are only 5% of the population. But the facts are that the overwhelming majority of the Oriyas are landless or poor peasants who, far from gaining by the rise in price, will lose, for they have to purchase grain for a considerable portion of the year.

As for the 'Balance of Trade' theory, (Sjt Mehtab's second argument outlined above), the people of Orissa want the prices of the necessities of life to be brought down and not shot up higher still by raising the rice price. Moreover, there is such a difference in the standards of life of the Bengali and the Oriya that any 'levelling' scheme will create havoc for the much poorer Oriya.

Popular Resentment: Profiteers' Approval

As soon as this demand of the Congress leader appeared in the press, there was a storm of protest from all shades of opinion in Orissa.

The *Samaj*, a nationalist daily which always supports the Congress, led the attack on Sjt Mehtab's proposals. Sjt Radhanath Rath, of the Servants of the People Society, wrote a series of articles pointing out the dangerous consequences of the acceptance of the proposal to raise prices. Sjt L.N. Sahu, of the Servants of India Society, also came out with sharp public criticism of the proposal.

On the other hand, the collection of people who came out in support of Sjt Mehtab's proposal, reveals clearly who stands to benefit from it.

Almost the first to rush into print in support of Sjt Mehtab was Karunakar Panigrahi—the biggest Oriya rice mill owner. This gentleman has now been returned as a Congress MLA.

The President of the Berhampore Chamber of Commerce has been circulating 'figures' to 'prove' the need of an increase in prices. It is also known that a number of large landowning *ryots* of Ganjam district, many of whom have suddenly come over to the Congress are pressing for this rise in prices. They stand to gain literally lakhs if Sjt Mehtab's proposal goes through.

For example, Sjt Biswanath Das, the former Congress Premier, owns more than 40,000 acres of land. With each acre producing, say, on an average, six maunds of rice, a rise of every rupee in the price per maund will put some 240,000 rupees in his pocket!

Another section definitely interested in Sjt Mehtab's proposal is that of the traditionally anti-Congress zamindars. Many of them have found a sudden love for the Congress and are doing their best to use whatever influence they possess to push up the price of rice.

But the town and rural poor and the middle-classes, are strongly opposed to any increase in prices.

Sjt Mehtab too has not mentioned his proposal again, and it can be hoped that the landlord-profiters' dreams have been firmly and finally dropped....

20. Outlook Gloomy in Most Districts of Madras Province

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Madras Province for the second half of April 1946. File No. 18/4/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Economic

No rainfall is reported from the majority of districts. In Chingleput, the Collector reports that crops are withering and the situation is very "gloomy". In Chittoor, it is apprehended that the paddy crop raised in the Punganur and Vayalpad taluks in the hope of rain, may wither, while in Tanjore it is reported that if the drought continues much longer, some of the wells may dry up and there may be difficulty for drinking water in the Arantangi Taluk which is a 'dry' area.

In one or two districts, however, there has been an appreciable amount of rainfall which has been of some help.

In Coimbatore, the condition for the standing crops in certain areas have been greatly improved and ploughing and sowing is being conducted, though on a limited scale. In Madura there has been considerable rain over many parts of the district greatly benefiting the millets crop. In Bellary, there was rain in the Kudligi and Harpanahalli areas as a result of which labour has fallen off in the relief works owing to agricultural operations.

In Anantapur District there are altogether now about 112 relief works but many of them are on a small scale and the total number of labourers engaged is only 5109. Cash doles and grain have been distributed so far in this district to more than 11,000 destitutes who are incapable of work.

In Nellore, the Collector reports that conditions in Rapur Taluk have deteriorated. In order to provide employment to agricultural labour he has sent up proposals for the starting of relief works in several centres of the taluk.

The scheme for subsidising well sinking is progressing satisfactorily in a number of districts. In South Arcot, more than Rs 4,14,000 has been sanctioned; in Trichinopoly also the figure is about Rs 4 lakhs. In Vizagapatam, the total amount of subsidy paid is more than Rs 1,92,000; in North Arcot, the Collector reports appreciable progress and that every effort is being made to push through the scheme.

Stocks are reported to be running low in Malabar and unless fresh allotments arrive early a critical situation is likely to develop. The imported stock in the deficit parts of the district are likely to last only for about 22 days.

In Ramnad, the Collector reports that though there is no immediate difficulty, large imports are required urgently to keep the ration shops functioning after the 15th of May. In Vizagapatam, imported stocks in the north of the district have fallen very low owing to delays in despatch of allotments expected from the Eastern States and Balasore.

The introduction of rural rationing and procurement operations are being speeded up, but more than one Collector reports that there is still a good deal of discontent among ryots and labourers on the score that the present scale of rations is inadequate and that a lot of propaganda will be required to explain reasons for it.

The Government have decided to extend the rationing of wheat products such as *madia* [flour with the bran removed], *sooji* [semolina] and bread to a number of municipal towns and their suburban areas with effect from the 5th May has also been prohibited except under a permit.

21. Food Shortages in Bengal Underestimated

Extracts from an article, 'Will Bengal face another famine?' *People's Age*, 26 May 1946.

... Careful calculations on the basis of certain related figures mentioned by the Director-General for Food in Bengal, a certain Mr S.K. Chatterjee, indicate that the shortage in 1946 is likely to be not half of the 1943 shortage but bigger. The shortage in 1946 is likely to be nearly 21 lac tons or nearly three times as big as Rajan [V.V. Rajan, Director of Supply, in a radio talk on 10 May had discussed the matter of food shortages in Bengal] tried to make it out to be.

In other words, it looks as if we are in for a famine at least as big as the 1943 one, if nothing is done about it right now.

How Much in Stock

Whenever there is shortage, stocks safely in the hands of the Government is obviously the first line of defence against famine.

Mr Rajan mentioned, without comment, that the Bengal Government has an hand 3½ lac tons - as if it were a proud achievement. In terms of rice for you and me, it only means that one out of every seven who will be without food because of the shortage, can be fed out of Government stocks!

Looking at it from another angle, it means that after 12 weeks, there will be no Government stocks to feed the 9 million townsfolk who will shortly be covered by the extended rationing scheme in Bengal at the present ration of 12 ounces of grain per head per day all over India.

In other words, by the end of August, Bengal's urban population will no longer get their rations. There will be nothing at all left, of course, for the villages stricken with famine.

As if this were not bad enough, there is every chance of the break down coming even earlier than August.

Because of the inadequate and corrupt storage arrangements, far too much of the Bengal Government's rice stocks has been going rotten. Almost every week there is news of the discovery of huge stocks of rotting rice....

How can Stocks be Increased?

... It is reliably estimated on the basis of official figures—that about two million tons of rice were sold in the rice markets of Bengal between January and April 1946.

So the Government has bought only one-tenth of this quantity, Nine-tenths has gone into the hands of traders who take to hoarding and black-marketing the moment they are sure of their ground....

Heavy Purchases by Traders

... The traders' 'blackmailing power' in fact, is greater this year than in any year except 1943 (when they had the entire harvest in the grip).

In 1944, the Government had bought 10 lac tons, or almost four times the amount they have got this year.

Even in 1945 they had a little over 6½ lac tons or over twice the quantity they have this year up to now.

Even if the Government is able to buy twice as much as it has in these four months—the traders will still have the upper hand....

Imports?

... The 'mighty' Government of India can hardly persuade the United States or Britain to send enough to prevent the entire all-India rationing system breaking down by the end of June. Nor has Wavell's stern 'threat' to force the Punjab and Sind Government to 'fall in line' and hand over their huge extra stocks made as long ago as February produced any results yet.

Moreover, it is obvious that even if the Government of India is able to get hold of some stocks, Madras will obviously get preference over Bengal, with her shortage estimated officially to be three times as big as Bengal's and facing a famine against which the 1943 Bengal famine, it is said, will look like a 'picnic'....

It Will Not be Tolerated

... Mr Suhrawardy, the present Premier and Food Minister in 1943, may have muddled through in 1943. But this time the common folk in Bengal won't take it lying down if he leaves it to the profiteers dressed as 'Government chief agents' and the officials to tackle the coming famine.

Political Parties' Responsibility

There is little time yet for members of all political parties in Bengal—whether Congress, Muslim League or Communist—to think over the situation seriously, find out the true facts and decide what can be done collectively by all of them to save Bengal from a second famine within three years.

2.2. Cloth Rationing in Bengal Criticised

Extracts from an article, 'Nine-man gang controls Bengal's cloth'. *People's Age*, 9 June 1946.

Nine men sit on Bengal's cloth and aid the British to keep the people naked. Take a good look at these names, the biggest five of the nine: Sir Badridas Goenka, B.M. Birla, Sir A.H. Ghaznavi, M.A. Isphahani, R.L. Nopani. They are behind the biggest ramp in Bengal today.

In September 1945, Governor Casey's Ordinance raj gave these nine gangsters the respectable name of 'The Board of Control of the Bengal Textile Association' (BTA).

The jobs of the BTA were described on the official files as:

- (1) Operating as wholesale dealers for cloth;
- (2) Improving the procurement of cotton cloth; and
- (3) Organising the wholesale distribution of cloth in the province.

Unheard of Profits

Casey and his sahib-caucus said they were 'compelled' to hand over the whole affair to Big Business because the Government had no cash. The BTA was expected to put out the six crore capital necessary for the job.

But Birla and Goenka know the ropes too well. Only eighty lakhs capital was subscribed. And the big nine then sat down to blackmail: "Give us the money or you get no cloth."

And thus with an investment of only 80 lakhs, the cloth sharks began to rake in one crore and five lakh rupees a year (at the estimated 3½ per cent return on the yearly turnover of 30 crores).

This was how Casey literally presented wagons of gold to the Goenka-Birla tribe—a 125 per cent return on their capital!

Cloth Famine in Return

One would have expected that having got this *carte blanche* to bleed the Bengali people, the BTA would at least do its job thoroughly.

But no. So greedy have these monopolies become for more and more cash that cloth procurement has been a dismal failure.

During the last six months, the BTA has procured enough cloth (1,32,435 bales) to provide each Bengali with 2¾ yards only. At this rate, the average annual quota of a Bengali will be 5½ yards—or just about half the already meagre fixed quota of ten yards.

This, of course, is what the BTA procured. It distributed well under half this amount during the same six months.

Thus the Bengali people have actually received less than a quarter of their already ridiculously small quota during this period—actually about a yard and a quarter per head!

Corruption and profiteering mark every stage of procurement and distribution under the BTA's rule....

If the League Ministry wants to help the people and the Ispahanis—it must close down the BTA profit-mine.

23. An All India Analysis of the Food Situation

Extracts from an article, 'Failing pulse of India's food system?' *People's Age*, 9 June 1946.

... The Government of India which declared in September 1945 that the deficit would be 15 lakh tons of rice gradually went on correcting the figure till it became 30 lakhs in the beginning of February and 40 lakhs at the end of the month. Then on March 2nd Mr Sen, the Food Secretary, in a press conference announced that the overall deficit would be 60 lakh tons of food grains with 10 lakh deficit as an additional carry-over for the next year.

The Central Government does not even have a proper plan of distribution of grain from surplus to deficit areas. As the *Times of India* wrote editorially on May 10th, "Contrary to what happened in previous years, there does not appear to be even a basic plan for sharing out India's crops."

Demands and Imports

In the discussions at Combined Food Board, the Indian delegation led by the trusted agent of the British, Ramaswami Mudaliar, made the demand for 20 lakh tons for the first half of the year.

But it is significant that J.J. Singh, one of the veteran fighters for the Indian cause in America issued a statement to the press that he had on good authority learnt that the Indian delegation succeeded in giving others the impression that they would be satisfied with much less.

However, Ramaswamy Mudaliar on his return declared confidently that 14 lakh tons of wheat and one lakh 45 thousand tons of rice will be in India by July 1st.

When Hoover came to India he was given the figures of imports needed by India during the months from May to September. They were:

	Tons
May	3,46,000
June	3,15,000
July	4,41,000
August	5,22,000
September	5,23,000
Total	21,46,000

In fact during May not a grain was received, and it was said by Hoover, evidently on the basis of information supplied by Government that three lakh tons were en route.

On May 24th, Srivastava, the Food Member, announced that only one lakh 60 thousand tons of wheat and about 25 thousand tons of rice were en route but he could not say when they would arrive.

The overall picture, therefore, as regards foreign imports is that for the first half of the year only four lakh 25 thousand tons had been received, i.e., only 1/6th of the demand for the first half year, though major part of the grain received was outstanding from 1945 last quarter quota.

All that is expected to be shipped in May and June is said to be four lakh 96 thousand tons of wheat and 85 thousand tons of rice. That is all.

Famine Areas and Relief

If we turn away from these figures and look at actual conditions of life, we find that already certain areas have been declared 'scarcity areas' which is only a genteel way of describing that famine conditions exist.

In the Bombay Province the districts of Bijapur, Belgaum, Dharwar, Satara, Sholapur and part of Nagar, with a total population of over 65 lakhs, are in the famine area.

In Madras, the five districts of Rayalaseema with a total population of over 60 lakhs, and in Mysore, the three district of Kolar, Tumkur and Chittordoorg (population 10 lakhs) are the worst hit.

On Government's own admission these are 'scarcity areas'. But the figures given of persons affected are only 27 lakhs in Bombay, 23 lakhs in Madras and 75 thousands in Mysore. What the meaning of 'persons affected' is I have not been able to get.

Except for four relief kitchens that operate in Mysore State, there is not a single relief kitchen anywhere in the above affected areas of British India.

In Bombay it is said that *bunding* and construction jobs have been started as relief works in Bijapur, Dharwar, and Belgaum, which employ 30,000 people.

This is quite apart from the deficit areas which depend upon imports, in which the figures show that Travancore, Cochin, Dercan, Bihar and the UP and other areas also need imports during the months May to September.

What the position is in the actual scarcity areas New Delhi is unable to say. All that they point out is that they have a Regional Food Commissioner for the whole of South India.

Rationing: Its Meaning

The Food Department of the Government of India, however, claims that 100 million persons or 1/4th our total population, are already under ration and the entire rural area in Bombay, Madras and Mysore get its benefit.

The Food Department also says that 30 million more will be brought under rationing within a month in Mysore, the United Provinces, Bengal, etc.

This only seems to indicate that famine condition[s] or 'scarcity' are beginning to show signs in those areas also.

It is hardly likely that when the Central Government is already panicky about its being able to maintain the grain reserve for present rationing, it could easily provide the supplies for three crore more people.

A Tall Claim

From reports received from Madras, it is clear, however, that this claim to have "brought the rural areas under rationing" is a tall one.

There is no doubt a form of rationing there but it is not anything of the type of rationing seen in Bombay.

What obtains in the rural areas of Madras was introduced in January 1946 and has been described by the Government official as a system of "intensive procurement and informal rationing".

Describing 'informal rationing' the official circular says that it ensures supplies to nonproducers of grain and to small producers who have to buy grain at certain months in the year.

The arrangement is to issue ration cards to these two classes of people and attach them to a ration shop situated at "a reasonable distance" from their place of residence.

This system however, operates very badly and does not solve the problem of supplying food to the rural poor. This issue of ration cards has been entrusted to the village officials like the *Karnam* who have long been known for their hatred and contempt of the rural poor.

Often ration cards are not issued at all and even if they are, in some cases the ration shop has no stock. The stocks when available are said to be of such poor quality and mixed with so much mud and stone that in certain areas in Andhra even the agricultural labourers are refusing to take ration cards.

The system of relying upon the bureaucratic machine for procuring grain has only driven the grain surpluses underground, being hidden away by the peasants or black-marketed by hoarders.

The picture, therefore, is that conditions in declared scarcity areas are quite bad despite this system of rationing.

Unable to Feed

How far the Government has been unable to meet the demands of these Provinces can be seen from the following:

(a) Madras which wanted 8,90,000 tons from May to September has secured a promise from the Central Government for only 74,000 tons during the months of May, June and July, i.e., less than 8½ per cent.

(b) Bombay which needed 3,30,000 tons for the same months as above has been promised only 25,000 tons for the next three months, i.e., 7½ per cent.

(c) Mysore which needs 1,14,000 tons is to get only 30,000 tons i.e., 26.3 per cent.

This means that already the grain position of the Central Government is so bad that even the worst affected areas it is not able to help except to the extent of promising to supply from a fourth to a tenth of their needs.

This is partly due to the fact that the surplus Provinces like the Punjab and Sind refused to apply a system of either compulsory procurement or rationing....

Prices are continually rising everywhere. In the biggest wheat market of the UP the price of wheat is Rs 16 per maund as against a controlled price of Rs 10-8-0 per maund, rice is now being sold at Rs 35 per maund in Narainganj, Bengal. From Dacca and other districts of Bengal come reports of all-round rises in the prices of rice, a rise of as much as seven rupees per maund in the second week of May.

Destitutes are pouring into Delhi and Lahore, though the Food Department denies this obvious fact and tries to make out that these people who have come there are not destitutes at all and they are just dupes of some contractor who is alleged to have brought them there promising them employment, and left them in the lurch.

Famine Timetable

During the first eleven days of May, 295 destitutes were picked up in Calcutta itself out of whom 119 were Bengalis. Cases of death from starvation have already been reported from Calcutta and Madras.

Food Department officials say that large-scale starvation can be staved off only for two months. If imports fail even the rationing would completely break down.

It is said that Mysore districts are the worst affected and that of all the three areas, Bombay alone would be able to hold out for sometime.

If the expected imports take place the Food Department says it will be able to keep a reserve form which stocks can be rushed to the most critical areas and thus mass deaths from starvation as in the Bengal famine, can be prevented.

This is, however, proof of the complete crack up of the Food administration.

During the war, the British Government pumped supplies to the industrial heart and the administrative arteries. Today, the pulse of the Food System is falling.

Two months is the deadline for the final crack up, it is felt in official and nonofficial circles.

When famine clouds burst, the whole belt from Adoni in Karnataka to Madras and southwest to Calicut will be the hardest hit. Mysore is already on the verge of starvation.

The Central Government as constituted today is unable to get supplies.

24. Monsoon Alleviates the Food Situation in Madras Province

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Madras Province for the first half of June 1946.
Fortnightly Reports; Public (General) Department, Government of Madras (1946);
Tamil Nadu State Archives.

Economic

The break of the Southwest monsoon has considerably allayed anxiety about food prospects. Mangalore reported as much as 20.5 inches of rain during the fortnight whereas Calicut had 8.48 inches.

25. Food Prices Shoot Up in Bihar

Extracts from an article, 'One million Biharis face starvation'. *People's Age*, 16 June 1946.

Bihar's food difficulties are not very much in the limelight. The glare of publicity is still on Madras and Bombay.

But in Bihar, rice and wheat prices are shooting as high as in Bengal. Rice is already selling at Rs 20 to Rs 28 per maund— at double the controlled rate. Wheat, too, is selling at Rs 20 to Rs 25 per maund.

This is very serious matter because only 18 lakhs or so barely— 5% of Bihar's total population—is covered by cheap grain and ration shops and can be sure of getting their rice at controlled rates.

There are about 50 lakhs or so who will starve if these skyrocketing prices are not brought down.

Quite clearly, Bihar traders are monsters out to make money by making people starve. What one would like to know is why the Bihar Congress Ministry does not put them down with an iron hand....

26. Six Districts of Bengal in Grip of Famine

Extracts from an article, 'Famine lifts its ugly head in Bengal'. *People's Age*, 23 June 1946.

Six districts in Bengal are already in the grip of famine. In Noakhali, Faridpur, Dacca, Tepperah, Pabna, the 24-Parganas the price of rice has already gone above Rs 30 per maund. In certain places it is as high as Rs 40.

Poor peasants, landless labourers and artisans have already begun to move out of their villages in search of food in Munshiganj Subdivision of Dacca and Madaripur Subdivision of Faridpur.

In these six district even middle-class people have begun to feel the pinch of famine....

The gravity of the situation can be realised from the fact that this year every one of East Bengal districts except Barisal is deficit in food requirements. Food prices in East Bengal are already higher than they were in the corresponding period of 1943....

27. Rice Ration Cut in Madras Province

Extracts from an article, 'Madras food crisis'. *People's Age*, 30 June 1946.

... Normally a deficit Province, in prewar years Madras used to depend on imports to the tune of nearly 1/10 of its food consumption. Under the inefficient and bureaucratic Adviser regime, food production has actually declined; the latest Jama-Bandi Report, dated April 5, 1946 shows that the total area under *ryotwari* has actually fallen from 210 lakhs to 206.9 lakh acres.

On top of this, in the last quarter of 1945, came a cyclone and drought which caused large-scale havoc and destruction of crops in the Godavary-Krishna and Cauvery Delta areas (the major rice-producing areas of Andhra and Tamilnad) and in large parts of Rayalaseema, the chronic famine districts of Andhra with a total population of over 60 lakhs.

Despite all this, the Adviser regime till the last remained criminally complacent, pinning its faith on resumed imports from Burma.

Under its procurement plan corrupt village officials (who were charged with fixing the surplus) let the big landlords and *mirasdars* whisk the major part of their stocks into the black market.

The rice millowners in the surplus districts (wholesale purchasing agencies under the bureaucracy's plan), who during the war had become hardened black marketeers, went round the villages during January and February and bought up paddy from the peasants (at Rs 9-8-0 to Rs 10 per bag of three maunds while the control price was Rs 11) by frightening them that when the Burma rice came prices would fall steeply.

The profiteers thus got control of the actual rice produced in their districts.

This was the grim situation which faced the Congress Ministry when it came into office.

How Serious the Situation is

How serious the food situation in the Province today is can be seen for the following basic facts:

	<i>Tons</i>
Estimated production of food grains this year	5,769,000
Food required for the Province at 1 lb per day per adult	7,000,000
Estimated deficit	1,231,000

or over two months' food for the entire population.

This is on the assumption that the entire surplus within the Province will be effectively procured and made available for the people.

But under the procurement plan of the Adviser regime, the major part of the surplus was left in the hands of the hoarders. The result is seen when we examine the present stock position.

In order to maintain the existing rationing scale on the basis of 12 oz per head till the end of October, the Province requires 1,272,000 tons. The stocks on hand with the Government on May 2, however, amounted only to 5,21,000 tons, considerably less than half the need, leaving a deficit of 7,51,000 tons to be made up to keep up the present rationing scale till the end of October.

This acute stock position has already led to serious consequences.

First, the system of 'informal rationing' in the rural areas of the deficit districts is rapidly beginning to collapse, owing to the inadequacy of stocks and irregular supplies.

Already by February this year, rice was disappearing from the market and famine conditions had begun appearing in the rural areas of the acutely deficit districts like Rayalaseema, Malabar, Vizagapatam, Madura and Ramnad.

Secondly, the Congress Ministry has already taken the step of reducing the rice ration from 12 oz to 10 oz the lowest ration for the staple food of the people in the whole country and scarcely enough for bare subsistence....

28. Congress Accuses Bengal League Ministry of Negligence

Extracts from a news report, 'Famine conditions in Bengal'. *Bombay Chronicle*, 18 July 1946.

Calcutta, July 17:—"From reports received we have no hesitation to assert that the whole Governmental machinery has been employed not in combating famine but in consolidating the Muslim League in Bengal," states a report by a subcommittee of the Bengal Congress Parliamentary Party on the food situation in the Province...API.

29. Food Situation in Madras Province

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Madras Province for the second half of July 1946. Fortnightly Reports; Public (General) Department, Government of Madras (1946); Tamil Nadu State Archives.

Economic

A general review of the rice situation in the province taking into account the imports promised by the Government of India was recently made and Government decided that the position was such as to call for a further reduction in the off-take of rice. Government have therefore passed orders reducing the rice portion of the ration from 10 ounces to 8 ounces per adult per day with effect from 4-8-1946. Heavy manual labourers will continue to get 10 ounces of rice. Stocks of rice are very low in the Madras City and in the districts of Malabar, Chingleput, Coimbatore, Kurnool, Cuddapah and Salem. The stock position of millets also continues to be unsatisfactory. Two shipments of maize have arrived and have been distributed to districts.

The formation of Village Taluk Committees in pursuance of the new procurement policy of the Government has been practically completed in all the districts, and with this a speeding-up of the pace of procurement is expected before long.

The agricultural season in Tanjore district and in the deltaic tracts of the Kistna and the Godavari continues to be favourable. The Southwest monsoon has been steadily bringing in rain. During the fortnight ending 27-7-1946 Mangalore recorded as much as 28.3 inches of rainfall.

The average wholesale prices of paddy (first sort) rose slightly while the prices of *cholam* declined. The prices of other essentially commodities showed little variation. The price of coconut increases by Rs 15 to Rs 180 per thousand while there was a sharp rise in the price of hides and skins.

30. 1000 Die Weekly of the Plague and Small Pox in Bihar

Extracts from an article, 'Epidemics take heavy toll in Bihar'. *People's Age*, 1 September 1946.

During the last six months 75,000 people have died in Bihar. A thousand are dying every week. The worst months—the post-flood months—are yet to come when rivers will subside and malaria will unleash a further crop of calamities. But the Congress Government in Bihar continues to dillydally with the problem.

This year's epidemic is more serious than that of 1944. Then, it was only cholera and malaria. This time—in 1946—these two have been joined in by plague and small pox also.

Plague has taken a heavy toll of life—rising upto 500 deaths per week in March. The average death rate from small pox from January to June has been 100 per week. And cholera has claimed over 15,000 people in the last six months.

Two thousand villages have been ravaged and razed to the ground so that hundreds of acres of land are lying untilled. There are either no people to till them or the few that are left there have not the physical strength to do so. (*Indian Nation*, May 19, 1946.)

Conspiracy to Hide the Facts

Far from rushing to the relief of the people, the bureaucrats—who still seem to have the run of the Government in Bihar tried to hide the true facts of the situation....

31. Bombay Provincial TUC Resolution on the Food Situation

Resolution proposed by Dinkar Desai and seconded by V. Chaudary at a meeting of the Bombay Provincial Trade Union Committee; 1 November 1946. File No. 79; All India Trade Union Congress Papers (1946); Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

The Bombay Provincial Trade Union Committee [BPTUC] views with grave concern the food situation in the country which, instead of improving, is deteriorating day by day.

In the opinion of the BPTUC, price factor is one of the most important aspects of our food problem in view of the fact that India's toiling millions are not in a position to consume adequate quantities of food unless and until the present prices are drastically reduced. It is very unfortunate that food prices are going up almost every month, as is evident from the all India index numbers prepared by the Economic Adviser to the Government of India. The index number which was 244 in April 1946 has risen to 254 in the last month. The BPTUC strongly urges that food prices should be brought down to reasonable levels. This is particularly necessary because wages of industrial workers have not increased in the same proportion as the rise in prices. While the food prices have increased by about 150 to 200 per cent, the increase in earnings, including dearness allowance, varies from 25 per cent to 123 per cent according to industry.

In the opinion of the BPTUC, price control should be continued so long as the food situation does not come to the normal. In this connection, the BPTUC strongly protests against the action of the Government of Bombay in removing control on *Gul* [gur: raw sugar] which forms an important article in the diet of our people. Further, the meeting protests against the action of the Government of India in increasing the price of sugar from Rs 15-10-0 to Rs 20 14-0 per maund. That the removal of controls would lead to increase in prices is well shown by the example of *Gul*, the price of which has doubled since the removal of control on this commodity.

The BPTUC is of considered opinion that the quantum of ration now given per adult per day falls far short of the physical need of the manual worker in the factory. The cut in the total ration of the manual workers is 50 per cent while the cut applied to the rest of the population amounts to 25 per cent. The meeting, therefore, urges that there should be not cut at all in the extra ration that was given to the manual workers. The meeting further urges that the cut in the ration of general population should also be restored as early as possible.

In the opinion of the BPTUC, schemes for increasing food production are hampered and rendered ineffective by landlordism and the vested parasitic interests, as a result of which tremendous [re]sources of land and peasant labour remain unused in saving in the country form starvation. Schemes for importing food from countries having surpluses are hampered by foreign monopoly capitalist interests; and even the procurement of food from countries like Indonesia and Burma whose people offer us supplies are made difficult by these interests. Finally, the procurement of food grains in the country itself and the system of distribution suffer from evils which keep the people in a state of scarcity.

The BTUC desires to bring to the notice of the Government of Bombay the fact that the distribution of maize as a part of one's ration is not liked by the working-class population as the people are not accustomed to this cereal. "Palatability is also necessary if the diet is to stimulate appetite and digestion and ensure psychological satisfaction," as rightly pointed out by the British Ministry of Food in a recent publication. In the opinion of the Special Joint Committee set up by the Combined Food Board, "unless food habits and traditions are given adequate consideration in planning food supplies, morals will be undermined and health and industrial

output will suffer because the individual may not consume either enough or the right kinds of food." The BPTUC, therefore, urges that maize should be replaced by another cereal to which the people are accustomed as early as possible.

32. Floods Damage Crops in Madras Province

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Madras Province for the second half of December 1946. Fortnightly Reports; Public Department (General) Government of Madras (1946); Tamil Nadu State Archives.

Economic

The fortnight witnessed incessant and heavy rains in most of the northern and southern districts. There were serious floods, communications were interrupted and some places cut off for several days. The low lying areas of Madras City were waterlogged and there were several cases of wall and house collapse resulting in 23 casualties, 8 of which were fatal. The water level in the Adyar and the Cooum rivers and the Buckingham Canal flowing through Madras City rose very high. The police organised rescue work, took steps to allay panic and patrolled the affected areas. The Madras Corporation authorities arranged for the feeding of the people in distress.

Floods were heavy in South Arcot, Chittoor and Nellore Districts. It is feared that there has been some damage to the standing wet and dry crops in these districts. The outturn of the standing crops is also likely to be adversely affected in Guntur and Cuddapah Districts. The rains caused several breaches both on the South Indian Railway and Madras and Southern Mahratta Railway lines. The main Madras-Bombay line has not yet been restored. The interruption of communications is likely to jeopardise the stock position of foodstuffs in some of the Districts and necessary measures have been taken.

5.A.ii Economic Policies

1. Excess Profits Tax Counterproductive in Postwar India

Extracts from an article 'Abolish the excess profits tax'. *Free Press Journal*, 10 January 1946.

The Excess Profits Tax was imposed as a purely wartime expedient. The war is over; but the tax remains.

Some have suggested that E.P.T. should be retained in the postwar period. The fallacy of the arguments that have advanced in support of this suggestion are clearly brought out in the article below.

Now that the emergency created by war is over, this tax should soon be abolished and the gap in revenue should be made up from other sources.

It has recently been suggested in some quarters that the Excess Profits Tax should be retained in India in the postwar period though in a changed form and at a lower rate of 40 per cent; or alternatively a maximum limit, such as already exists in the case of Reserve Bank Shares, should be imposed on the dividends of different industrial companies and after meeting the fixed dividend the balance of net profits should be appropriated by the Central Exchequer. Both these suggestions are open to serious objection and would do irreparable harm to India's industrial progress.

The excess profits tax, which amounted to Rs 101.57 crores in 1944-45 (revised) and is budgeted at Rs 85.57 crores for 1945-46, has prevented an adequate capital accumulation in almost all Indian industries....

2. Demonetisation Ordinance Ill-conceived and Immoral

Editorial, 'Fight, fight, fight!' *Free Press Journal*, 15 January 1946.

The Demonetisation Ordinance must be fought, tooth and nail, until victory is won.

To win the fight, there must be organised action.

The Congress, the League, the European and the Indian Chambers of Commerce can unite to fight the Ordinance.

To fight the Ordinance is not to hold a brief for black marketers.

The limited objective of the Government of India to bring black market operations "within the knowledge of the Government and of the Taxing Authorities, in particular," can be achieved by providing for the unconditional exchange of notes on the registration of the holdings by the holders.

Such action would bring the hoarded notes into circulation.

The Government of India have adequate machinery at their command, to carry out searching investigations into all suspected cases of ill-gotten gains.

The burden of proof of guilt will rest on the Government of India to secure convictions under the Ordinance.

The burden of proof of innocence in respect of action under Income Tax is easily shifted to the hoarder of currency notes.

The declared objective of the Government of India in promulgating the Demonetisation Ordinance is unobjectionable.

The provisions of the Ordinance, however, effectively aim at securing the cancellation of crores of rupees of currency notes, by playing on the fear complex of subject people.

The graves objection, however, to the Demonetisation Ordinance, is that it legalises a repudiation of an acknowledged debt by the State.

The State represents the expression of the will of the people in free countries.

In India, the State is the instrument of an alien Government, totally irresponsible to and irremovable by the elected representatives of the people, constituting the Central Legislature.

Further, the Ordinance embodies the principle of vicarious punishment.

Currency Notes, having remained legal tender until January 13, have circulated freely, without question, in good faith, based on the statutory guarantee of the value of the notes.

Obligations must have been undertaken on the strength of the Currency Notes.

The invalidation of Currency Notes, however, temporarily and to however limited an extent, even if it affects only a few honest holders, constitutes a crime against Society.

That the crime is perpetrated by a nondemocratic totalitarian State, which is a law unto itself and against which the citizens have no legal or constitutional remedy, aggravates the crime....

The depreciation of the value of the affected Currency Notes by 40 to 60 per cent in the course of forty-eight hours is an indication of the wide repercussions of the ill-advised Ordinance.

The Indian Nationalist Movement has claimed over a period of twenty-five years the right to repudiate India's debt to Britain and also to confiscate alien vested interests established in India.

India, it is true, is no longer a debtor country; the boot is on the other leg.

But, there are vast British interests established in India; their confiscation without compensation would be a natural corollary to the Demonetisation Ordinance.

The fight against the Ordinance is not on behalf of any sectional or class interest.

It is fight for the preservation of order, peace and security of India. It is a fight for Morality, Decency and Law against Legalised Loot, Depravity and Anarchy.

The Demonetisation Ordinance cannot stand the test of reality.

Knock, knock and knock and the obnoxious provisions of the Ordinance will follow, as surely as day follows night.

3. Bombay Against the Proposed Sales Tax

Extracts from a news report, 'City-wide hartal to protest against proposed sales tax'.
Free Press Journal, 15 January 1946.

In response to a call made by the Sales Tax Protest Committee representing over two hundred Trade Associations of Greater Bombay, a City-wide *hartal* was observed today, thousands of business establishments, both big and small, participated. Shops right from Andheri to Fort in the West, and from Ghatkopar and Kurla to Fort in the East were closed.

It was after a long time that the city observed a *hartal* in which people of all classes and communities participated.

Important business localities like Kalbadevi, Girgaum, Abdul Rehman Street, Mohamedali Road, Lohar Chawl, Lal Baug and Dadar presented a deserted appearance.

In the afternoon over four thousand businessmen from all over the city gathered at the Halai Lohana Mahajan Wadi, Thakurdwar, under the Presidentship of Mr K.M. Bhojpuria and passed a resolution protesting against the proposed Sales Tax. The meeting included representatives of over two hundred business associations of Greater Bombay.

Corporation Voices City's Protest

The Bombay Municipal Corporation was at its meeting this afternoon echoed the opinion of Greater Bombay when it passed a resolution of protest against the Sales Tax proposed to be levied by the present Section 93 Government of Bombay. Whilst the city traders were observing a City-wide *hartal* and holding protest meetings, the Corporation was busy with the resolution which was moved by Mr P.M. Chinai and was seconded by Mr B.V. Gandhi.

The resolution says: "That the Corporation strongly disapproves of the Government proposal to levy at the present juncture a Sales Tax in the Province of Bombay for financing their Postwar Reconstruction expenditure in as much as it is inopportune in view of the impending elections to the Provincial Legislatures who, in the opinion of the Corporation, should have the opportunity of investigating the proposal in connection with their whole policy of financing the plans for developments in the Province that might be adopted by them."

4. Demonetisation Ordinance Iniquitous and Unsuccessful

Extracts from an editorial, 'Stop this fooling'. *Free Press Journal*, 16 January 1946.

The Demonetisation Ordinance has come into operation with all the clumsiness of an unwieldy machine.

Those who had expected the black marketer to come out, exposed in all his iniquity, must have begun to feel disillusioned.

The crowds that queued up at the Reserve Bank to get declaration forms, could not be all anti-social pests. In fact, the antisocial pests were far away from the scene devising ways of escaping the net....

It is an impertinence to ask a man or woman why he chose to keep his earning in notes of a particular denomination. Once the impertinence is tolerated, the path to trouble lies wide open....

5. The Impact of the Currency Ordinance

Extracts from a news report, 'Calcutta girl's marriage postponed'. *Free Press Journal*, 21 January 1946.

Calcutta, January 20. The Currency Ordinance has postponed the marriage of at least one Calcutta girl. Her father, a Pandit of 60 was one of the very large crowd that had gathered in the hall of the Reserve Bank of India for exchange of high denomination notes.

He said that he had scraped together a few thousand rupees for the marriage of this, his third daughter, already 18 years of age. He had converted the amount into high denomination notes for convenience and safety in travelling and was about to buy the usual 'Trousseau' for his daughter when the Currency Ordinance was issued. All his resources were frozen and he had to wait for the exchange of the notes....

6. G.D. Birla on the Demonetisation Ordinance

Extracts from a news report, 'New Delhi is riding roughshod over people's rights'. *Free Press Journal*, 21 January 1946.

New Delhi, January 20. While he had every sympathy and was [at] one with any object calculated to attack the black market and check tax dodgers, but unfortunately, the Demonetising Ordinance had created more black markets, declared Mr G.D. Birla, the Indian industrialist, interviewed by the API today.

Mr Birla saw three defects in the execution of the Ordinance. Firstly, there was not sufficient time given within which he approximately computed hundred crores could be exchanged for smaller denomination currency. It would not be possible to finish the transaction before January 26.

Not Desirable

Secondly, far too wide powers had been delegated to scheduled banks' managers to decide for themselves whether a statement filed by a note-holder was complete or not, or correct or otherwise. "This wide power conferred on scheduled banks authorities is not desirable," Mr Birla said.

Riding Roughshod

Thirdly, black markets and tax evaders were everywhere. The problem had [also] to be faced in the United Kingdom, but the Government of India has acted in a much more complicated manner than USA and England.

Mr Birla said the necessary forms required to be filled in for exchanging the notes, according to his information, had not reached Assam till yesterday (Saturday).

"I personally don't think the Ordinance is going to help very much the cause which Government has in mind; on the contrary, it may lead to genuine complaints, which I hope Government will look into," he said.

Confusion Worse Confounded

Mr Birla urged that free convertibility of the currency into smaller denomination notes should not be interfered with provided, of course, everyone who possessed such notes furnished the authorities with his correct name and address. Once a person gave his name and address it should be deemed to be sufficient to change the note.

"Government has been very hasty," Mr Birla said. "They have not created a proper machinery to cope with the problem and the present machinery is finding it impossible to deal with the situations." ...

7. The Demonetisation Ordinance Gravely Flawed

Extracts from a news report, 'Ordinance that paralyses trade and retards development'. *Free Press Journal*, 21 January 1946.

Patna, January 20. The Bihar Chamber of Commerce in a representation to the Government of India point out the very grave flaws in the Ordinance which in its application will let the black marketer go scot-free but penalise many an honest trader, who because of the peculiar conditions of India keeps his money in high denomination notes. The Chamber urges the immediate withdrawal of the Ordinance. Any delay, the Chamber says, "will not merely paralyse trade, but retard the industrial development of the country, giving an undue advantage to the importing [exporting, surely] countries to dump their goods on India." ...

8. Anti-sales Tax Violence in Dhaka

Extracts from a news report, 'Crowds raid Dacca cinema house'. *Free Press Journal*, 5 March 1946.

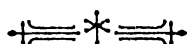
Dacca, March 4. Last evening, a crowd raided three cinema houses in the town, one after another, and broke the furniture, damaged the screens and some machinery and forcibly stopped the shows.

At one of them the people set fire to the screen and furniture, but fire fighters appeared on the scene in time and extinguished it. The crowd carried Congress and Muslim League flags.

These incidents happened soon after a public meeting had passed a resolution demanding the total abolition of the Sales Tax.

Mr Sirish Chandra Chatterjee, President of the District Congress Committee, in a statement to the Associated Press of India denounced last night's violence and said that it was against the policy of the Congress.

A prominent Muslim Leaguer also condemned last night's incidents....



9. Postwar International Trade and Indian Interests

Extracts from a news report, 'No bartering of right to shape India's economic destiny'.
Free Press Journal, 9 May 1946.

Bombay, Wednesday. "Our attitude to the proposal regarding International Trade Organisation will have to be largely dependent on the extent to which our special needs and requirements are recognised and provided for. We should be allowed to retain full freedom of action for taking all measures necessary or promoting our own internal development," declared Mr M.H. Hasham Premji, President, Indian Merchants' Chamber, at the First Quarterly General Meeting of the members of the Chamber today.

All efforts to secure freedom for world trade from the artificial control and barriers should be welcome. But the restoration of international freedom of trade should be preceded by a recognition of the need for improving national standards, it should not mean that highly industrialised countries, should under a policy of free trade, be enabled to enjoy the opportunities available without let or hindrance, in countries which are still industrially undeveloped and thereby perpetuate the existing disparity in standards.

Any programme for developing Indian industries and thereby creating more stable and permanent conditions for increased employment in this land was bound directly or indirectly to create some degree of unemployment in corresponding industries in other countries which used to cater [to] Indian markets. A strict compliance with this provision would result in the perpetuation of the existing standard of industrialisation—a contingency which India in her present state of backwardness could never agree to.

Ineffective Tariff Policy

Similarly with regard to tariffs and preferences, under the proposals, member-bodies were expected to arrange "for substantial reduction of tariffs and for the elimination of tariff preferences in conjunction with adequate measures for substantial reduction of barriers to world trade." In this sphere, particularly, India would have to insist on important reservations, which would safeguard her rights to adopt and pursue a tariff policy best suited to her requirements and subserve any domestic programme of industrialisation as part of her plans for improving the standard of life of the son of the soil.

India was the only country where even protective tariffs were fixed after the most searching examination and scrutiny. The tariff policy of the Government of India in the past was in no small measure, influenced by the anxiety to ensure that Indian industrialisation did not result in any large-scale displacement of the Indian market for British manufactures.

Representative Organisation Needed

Mr Premji reiterated the claim that the Indian delegation to the preliminary conference of the International Trade Organisation should include accredited representatives of commercial and industrial interests. The delegation should press for material modifications in the basic proposals enunciated in the proposals and secure special recognition of the claims and needs of India. Unless this was agreed to, India should not join the new International Organisation.

Referring to the proposed Indo-British Treaty Mr Premji said that transfer of sovereignty must, precede the conclusion of any treaty. Mr Premji added that in the name of protecting the rights of the minorities, no attempt should be made to include in the treaty any special provisions for safeguarding the interests of or for conferring any special privileges on the British commercial

community in this country. Any attempt to introduce analogous provisions through [the] back-door in the nature of special provisions to be covered by treaty arrangements would be stoutly resisted.

Revise Taxation Policy

Referring to the budget proposals for the current year of the Government of India, Mr Premji said that taxation policy should be such as to plough back private savings into industrial activities.

Mr Premji hoped that the Government of India would not proceed with the question of the planning of investment and the setting up of a National Investment Board.

Mr Ratilal Mulji Gandhi, Vice-President, Indian Merchants' Chamber, condemned the Government for its "Incompetent handling of the country's agriculture and food problem. The Government had failed to devise efficient means for (1) procurement and purchasing, (2) storage, (3) transport, (4) distribution. Two ways of meeting the food crisis were (1) import of wheat and rice quickly, (2) by arranging proper distribution and procurement of the existing stocks and preventing waste.

Wastage of Foodgrains

Referring to the annual wastage involved in Government's handling of foodgrains, he said that 3 million tons of foodgrains was made unfit for human consumption every year because of faulty storage. He urged that the distribution should be allowed to be handled by normal trade channels. It was also necessary that the business community should refrain from anti-social activities, like hoarding, profiteering and black-marketing.

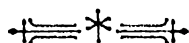
Economic Development Plans

In the scheme of industrialisation small-scale and cottage industries should be given due importance. Industries allied to agriculture like animal husbandry, dairy farming, tanning and leather work, fruit culture and forest industries should be developed as a plan for economical development [sic]. The state must give necessary assistance to these industries, in the form of credit facilities, through cooperative societies, technical education, collective marketing and protection from large-scale industries. The production of commercial crops like jute, tea, cotton, oilseeds, etc., must be planned both for the industrial development and export markets.

For this planning, a National Government with full sovereign power and responsible for the people of this country must be established.

Tip To Popular Ministry

Mr Premji expressed the hope that the popular Ministry in Bombay would pursue a financial policy which would serve the long-term needs of the province and at the same time would not necessitate a violent or too rapid increase in the existing incidence of provincial taxation....



10. Discussion with Britain Regarding India's Sterling Balances

Extracts from a copy of a letter by Purshotamdas Thakurdas to G.D. Birla; Bombay [?]. 14 December 1946. File No. 336; Purshotamdas Thakurdas Papers (1946); Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

*Bombay [?],
December 14, 1946*

My dear Ghanshyamdasji,

... There is one more point which strikes me in connection with the sterling balances. You perhaps know by now that HMG [His Majesty's Government] are sending out a delegation from UK to India at what they call 'expert level' which I presume will contain one representative of the Bank of England, one from the Treasury, and one from the India Office at least. They have to be met at this end by responsible officers from the Government of India and the Reserve Bank, and I understand that they are to clarify facts and so on. I feel that the personnel from our side should be completely Indian, as this alone will admit of a sort of free discussion of the Indian point of view by the officers whom we select. This is no reflection on any British person in the Government of India, but there is a very strong feeling here that the best of Britishers have been found to be so partial with regard to sterling balances that an Indian Government should select only Indian personnel to discuss this question. I do not think Liaquat will oppose this, but if he opposed it, I think the Cabinet ought to tackle this, as if the correct step is taken at the start, it may help all along the line. Will you think this over, and if you agree with my view, do the needful to bring it to the notice of Sardar Vallabhbhai and others. I attach considerable importance to this and hence this letter. If necessary, the Federation can put in a letter to this effect and publish it in the press. I understand that the delegation is likely to go out in the first week of January, and I think there is time enough to move in the matter now.

Yours sincerely,
[Unsigned copy].

11. Indo-British Agreement on the Manufacture of Textile Spinning Machinery

Extracts from an article, 'British business gets firm grip over India's textile industry'. *People's Age*, 29 December 1946.

An Indo-British business deal has just been announced from London, for the manufacture of textile spinning machinery in India. The parties to the deal are Mr Krishanraj Thakersey, acting on behalf of the Indian textile delegation to Britain, and Mr Kenneth Preston, Chairman of the Textile Machinery Makers Limited (TMM). The British firm is to give full assistance and cooperation in starting the concern and the project provides for the formation of an Indian company with Rs 1 crore capital.

Now this deal is important from more than one point of view.

First, it is to manufacture very badly needed spinning machinery which is essential for increasing cloth production in India and relieving cloth shortage.

Secondly, as a business group, the Indian side in the deal is very powerful. The textile delegation was representative of the most powerful branch of Indian industry. Its leader,

Mr Krishnaraj Thakersey, has been President of the Central Textile Control Board for some time. Besides, it was the first industrialist' delegation to go to England under the present Interim Government.

There is a general presumption, therefore, that the delegation should have secured the best possible terms from the British—i.e., no technical or financial control by the British. As the *Commerce* has put it: "The very fact that the delegation was sent by a truly national Government and that its efforts are to be, if they have not already been, judged and approved by the Government should be proof positive that there is nothing in the delegation's agreement with the TMM which is prejudicial to the interests of India."

Hard Bargain

The *Commerce* has, in fact, made the definite claim that the terms of this new deal are such that: "They ... indicate that British businessmen there have changed in their outlook towards India and are more reasonable and eager to enter into business deals with their Indian compeers without putting forward unreasonable demands to which no self-respecting country would subscribe."

And further: "We can confidently state that they (the delegation) have done much better than some of the individual industrialists—the newly formed automobile and rayon concerns, for instance—who have secured technical skill from abroad."

And, yet, the light the *Commerce* itself throws on the terms of the deal show that there is no real change. British business has once again driven a hard bargain and has now got a long-term, permanent stake in this very strategic industry on which depends the development of India's textile industry.

The main points of the deal are:

1) The TMM will have a share in the capital—whose exact amount is not known, but is generally suspected to be a huge amount. Further, this share "will not merely consist of the shares that will be allotted to them in consideration of their willingness to teach Indians the technique of producing textile machinery but will also include a substantial amount of their own funds."

British Grip

In other words on top of a free gift of shares, there will be direct money investment by the British firm giving them a strong financial grip on the firm.

2) Twenty-five per cent of the seats on the Board of Directors will be reserved for the TMM.

3) "The Company will concern itself with the production of spinning machinery—practically all the parts of a spinning plant. The productive capacity of the factory will be 20,000 spindles per month in the initial period, with a maximum of 40,000 spindles per month to be reached within five years from the commencement of production which may be early in 1948."

4) Two specialists of TMM's will be reaching India in the first week of January to direct technical construction.

5) The TMM are to have a hold on the new concern for a "long period".

6) Immediately, the TMM are shifting one of their own plants of India "where the prices of raw material and the cost of labour alike are relatively cheaper" and "they can easily satisfy the requirements of India, which they cannot do at present" from England where costs are prohibitive. The products of this TMM plant and the future Indo-British plant are to be sold jointly.

Main Features

It will be seen that the deal has three outstanding features:

The British firm is getting a long-term financial stake in the new Indo-British concern.

Actual progress to manufacture in India depends upon the British technicians and experts.

Immediately the TMM are taking advantage of this deal to get an independent foothold in India by shifting their old plant here.

These terms are no better than terms secured by the National Rayon Corporation or other deals referred to. In fact, they are worse than most other Indo-British deals (the Imperial Chemicals-Tata and Nuffield-Birla deals, for instance) because the British have a big share in the Board of Directors.

The only 'difference' the *Commerce* is able to point out is that there is to be no payment of royalties. But that is neither here nor there. When one sees the other financial and technical advantages the British firm has got without royalty payment—it is not surprising that they have not, insisted on payment of royalties.

The truth is that as long as vital industries are left in the hands of private business, penetration of British Big Business cannot be prevented. The weight of the Interim Government will count for nothing as long as it allows Indo-British business deals to go through.

End Foreign Interests

The only way in which British Big Business can be kept out of vital Indian industries and advance towards actual manufacture speeded up, is along the lines indicated by the National Planning Committee.

"Foreign interests now exercising predominant control over certain vital industries," said the Committee in a resolution passed on November 12, 1945, "should be secured by the State" and "hereafter investment of foreign capital should not ordinarily be permitted to involve ownership in respect of industries of national importance."

"It is possible," it added, "in view of India's vast capital requirements in the coming years that she may need capital from other countries. It is not, however, in her interest to accept it if it is required for essential industries, except in the shape of loans or credits raised by or through the State."

It is time the Interim Government tried to implement these sound decisions of the Planning Committee.

5.A.iii Hirakud Dam Issue

1. Agitation Against Hirakud Dam in Sambalpur, Orissa

Extracts from a letter by C.M. Trivedi, Governor of Orissa, to H.K. Mehtab, Prime Minister of Orissa; Puri, 22 June 1946. File No. 3; Dr Harekrishna Mehtab Papers (1946); Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

Puri,
22 June 1946.

My dear Prime Minister,

If press reports are any indication of public feeling, the agitation against the Hirakud Dam appears to be growing in the Sambalpur district. Ever since I came to this province I have

been repeatedly suggesting effective counter-propaganda. We have no doubt done something, but I feel that it is not enough. The other day the PWD file on the subject was sent to me. It contained a note by Mr Pujari, which was admittedly very weak and could not possibly provide a basis for effective propaganda. I returned the file suggesting that the Publicity Officer should take charge of the case obtaining the necessary materials from the departments concerned and prepare really good publicity stuff. At the same time I indicated the headings under which material might be collected. Nothing else occurs to me so far as official publicity is concerned.

2. I am wondering whether it is possible for you to do anything non-officially. If my information is correct, there are rifts in the local Congress organisation in Sambalpur district, it is not possible to hold the workers together, at any rate on this one issue.

3. Having been associated with public life for a number of years you know more than I do how misapprehensions grow. My own experience leads me to believe that misapprehensions grow like monsters within a very short time. I hope you will not mind my writing to you on this matter, but I do feel that it is important for us to take time by the forelock. If we let the grass grow under our feet we will have nothing but weeds....

Yours sincerely,
C.M. Trivedi.

2. Economic Development of Orissa

Extracts from a letter by Nitvanand Kanungo, Minister, Government of Orissa, to H.K. Mehtab, Prime Minister of Orissa; Cuttack, 29 June 1946. File No. 3; Dr Harekrishna Mehtab Papers (1946); Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

*Cuttack,
29 June 1946.*

My dear Mehtab,

I beg to submit the following for your consideration and consultation with His Excellency, if you deem it necessary.

1. The proposed Industrial Credit Corporation is designed to stimulate the growth of industry and also to secure a portion of the ownership for the people of this Province who are backward in matters of discriminating investment. As I have mentioned earlier, the scheme cannot work unless an officer with experience on [of] industrial financing is secured and appointed. This officer cannot be recruited through advertisement.

2. Expansion of the Cooperative Movement as well as Rural and Agricultural Credit cannot develop unless requisite financial advice is available to the Government and a Central Banking Organisation for the purpose is built up. I visualise a Central Bank which will cater for all the three types of credit, long, short and intermediate, in the rural areas, both through the cooperative organisation and otherwise. This again cannot develop without a suitable officer with banking experience, as I have mentioned earlier. I had some correspondence with Sri Vaikunth Mehta, the Finance Minister of Bombay, who is one of the acknowledged authorities of Cooperative Movement....

Yours sincerely,
Nitvanand Kanungo.

3. Government Takes Hirakud Agitation Seriously

Letter by C.M. Trivedi, Governor of Orissa, to H.K. Mehtab, Prime Minister of Orissa; Cuttack, 6 August 1946. File No. 3; Dr Harekrishna Mehtab Papers (1946); Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

*Cuttack,
6th August 1946.*

My dear Prime Minister,

I have been thinking again about the agitation in the Sambalpur district against Hirakud Dam and would be glad if you would be good enough to discuss this matter with me when we meet this evening at 7 p.m. It is quite clear that the agitation has to be taken very seriously. It is equally clear to my mind at any rate that there can be no question of withdrawing from the scheme which is of such fundamental importance to the well-being of the people of the province and also the Orissa States. Do you think the stage has come when I should ask Khosla to come here and have a talk with us? For instance, is it technically feasible, without impairing the utility of the scheme, to build a dam of a smaller height, thus reducing the area to be submerged? Very difficult questions are likely to arise in connection with the resettlement of submerged villages elsewhere in the district.

Yours sincerely,
C.M. Trivedi.

4. Should the Dam be Built at All?

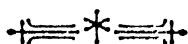
Copy of a letter by H.K. Mehtab, Prime Minister of Orissa, to C.M. Trivedi, Governor of Orissa; 10 August 1946. File No. 3; Dr Harekrishna Mehtab Papers (1946); Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

10 August 46.

Your Excellency,

I have written to Mr Gokhale and Sir Akbar Hydari to depute Mr Khosla at an early date to discuss matters with us. I think, you have also written to Mr Gokhale about it. Apart from the site of the Hirakud Dam, the question is whether the river Mahanadi should be harnessed by dam system. If this system is accepted, then the Dam must be constructed somewhere, and wherever it is constructed there will be some agitation. Therefore we have to face agitation on the ground of harnessing the Mahanadi with dam system. For that elaborate propaganda should be necessary. We are discussing the subject tomorrow.

Yours sincerely
H.M.



5. Pros and Cons of the Hirakud Dam Project

Extracts from a copy of a letter by H.K. Mehtab, Prime Minister of Orissa, to B. Keskar, General Secretary, All India Congress Committee, Allahabad; 13 August 1946. File No. 7; Dr Harekrishna Mehtab Papers (1946); Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

13 August 46.

Dear friend,

... As regards planning in our province, a very interesting and complicated situation has arisen and I think some sort of this thing also might have arisen in other provinces. You know, our province is notorious for floods and the great river Mahanadi is now proposed to be dammed on the line of TVA [Tennessee Valley Authority in USA]. This scheme has been accepted by the Government of India and they have helped the province to the extent of Rs 50 crores and the Indian and American engineers are at work now. This is called multipurpose dam scheme which means that the dams erected will not only serve to prevent floods but also it will irrigate large acreage and will generate electricity also. But in order to construct a dam a large area also has to be submerged. The first dam is to be constructed in the district of Sambalpur where 200 villages have to be displaced. In spite of the assurance that ample compensation will be paid and also alternative site and land will be provided for that, there is considerable agitation there and the leaders of the agitation are all Congressmen. I do not know how to meet the situation. Planning always means some displacement here and there and there will be discontent wherever there is any displacement. Unless the entire Congress organisation makes itself planning minded and choose [s] a way different from what it has done so far. I do not think planning will be an easy affair. I am writing to Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and also to Mahatma Gandhi to say a few words on our dam project.

As regards our other items of planning, I shall send you a note as soon as possible.
Hope you are doing well.

Yours sincerely,
H.M.

6. Development of Orissa Salt Industry

Extracts from a letter by C.M. Trivedi, Governor of Orissa, to H.K. Mehtab, Prime Minister of Orissa; Cuttack, 16 September 1946. File No. 3; Dr Harekrishna Mehtab Papers (1946); Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

*Cuttack,
16 September 1946.*

My dear Prime Minister,

Sir Hawthorne Lewis noted on a file in March last that he had done as much as he could during the war years to stimulate greater activity in the development of our salt resources and that the Central Government had recently helped in that direction, particularly in [a] very poor area near Huma. He went on to add that he had no doubt that more remained to be done, and that I might in due course find an opportunity to press the matter further on the attention of Government of India.

(2) The file has been put up to me twice or thrice, but unfortunately in a state not ripe for action of any sort. It is not however the state of the file that matters so much as the present uncertainty regarding the policy of the Government of India. One sees press reports about the possibility of the abolition of the salt tax, and one also hears that concurrently the salt industry will be nationalised. I have no official or semi-official information on this point. You are of course fully aware that salt manufacture was in the sixties [eighteen sixties?] a great industry in Orissa, and several thousands of people depended upon it for their livelihood. All this is now a thing of the past, and the question is how the development of the salt industry in Orissa can be dovetailed into any of the plans of the Government of India. I suggest that if you have time, it is worthwhile to mention to Dr Matthai, when you are in Delhi, that we do expect the claims of Orissa in the matter of the development of the salt industry not to be overlooked by the Government of India in any of their plans. We did address the Government of India in March last asking them to let us know whether they had formulated a five-year plan for the development of salt industry in Orissa, and the reply we received in June was that the matter was under examination....

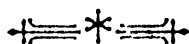
Yours sincerely,
C.M. Trivedi.

7. Government Participation in the Industrial Development of Orissa

Extracts from copy of a letter by V. Narahari Rao, Secretary, Finance Department, Government of India, to Governor of Orissa; New Delhi, 7 October 1946. File No. 3; Dr Harekrishna Mehtab Papers (1946); Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

... In May last when the Hon'ble Premier and the Finance Minister of Orissa visited Delhi they discussed with me the question of the Provincial Government actively participating in the industrial development of Orissa by setting up various mills. I cautioned them against the danger of public funds being lost through the selfishness of private managing agents and suggested that State participation in industrial development might be considered more on the lines of what had been done in the past in Mysore. I suggested also that one of the difficulties in State participation in combination with private interests was the lack of experience on the part of Governments in industrial management and control. Before embarking, therefore, on direct industrial enterprise by the State or in combination with private enterprise, it was essential to build up an experienced body of Government officials who would secure efficient and sound management of the industry under Government's supervision and control.

2. I do not know what further progress has been made in Orissa in the matter. If the Government of Orissa are thinking of large-scale participation in industry, I can suggest with confidence the name of Mr M.A. Srinivasan, who has just retired from the position of a Minister in Mysore, to advise the Government of Orissa....



8. Government Not to Participate Appreciably in Oriyan Industries

Extracts from a copy of a letter by H.K. Mehtab, Prime Minister of Orissa, to C.M. Trivedi, Governor of Orissa; Chandipur, 13 October 1946. File No. 3; Dr Harekrishna Mehtab Papers; Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

*Camp: Chandipur,
13 October 1946.*

Your Excellency,

Since it has been decided that Government of Orissa will not participate in industries in large scale, the question of appointing an Industrial Adviser does not arise for the present. When it arises, we will certainly consider the appointment of Mr M.A. Srinivasan.

Yours sincerely,
HM.

9. Maharaja of Patna Behind the Hirakud Dam Agitation

Copy of a letter by H.K. Mehtab, Prime Minister of Orissa, to C.M. Trivedi, Governor of Orissa; 18 October 1946. File No. 4; Dr Harekrishna Mehtab Papers (1946); Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

18 October 1946.

Your Excellency,

I send herewith a copy of the proceedings of the discussion that I had with the Rulers at Sambalpur on the 18th October. I have sent a copy of proceedings to the Political Agent for confirmation.

Although it has not been mentioned definitely in the proceedings, it was openly said by the Maharaja of Sonapur and also admitted at last by the Raja of Sareikella that the Maharaja of Patna was at the bottom of the Hirakud agitation, and it was, as jocularly said by the Raja of Sareikella, undertaken as a measure of self-defence. Anyway, it would be better if you kindly keep the Resident informed of what is happening here. Of course, this correspondence must be confidential.

Yours sincerely,
HM.

10. Objections to the Dam to be Dealt with Carefully

Copy of a letter by the Governor of Orissa to B.K. Gokhale, Secretary, Department of Works, Power and Mines, Government of India; 16 November 1946. File No. 34; Dr Harekrishna Mehtab Papers (1946); Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

I have been in Sambalpur for the last five days, and I have naturally been acquainting myself with local feeling about the Harakund Dam. I have already written to you from time to time about the objection raised locally against the project. Only recently, one Mr Rangaiya, retired Chief Engineer, Mysore PWD has given his opinion urging a good deal of caution about the project. His opinion is already receiving publicity here. In fact, it appears to have been given

on request from the Anti-Hirakud Dam Committee. One or two of its members went to Mysore to consult Rangaiya. The project report must deal with the objections raised. I have therefore given a copy to Vasisth.

2. Yet another pamphlet, purporting to be from a geologist of Sambalpur, has been published, raising an objection to the project on the ground that it will harm the mineral resources of the district. I am enclosing a copy. It is, I consider, very important the objections should be examined by the Geological Survey of India, and an authoritative pronouncement made. The project report should obviously deal with the objections.

3. There is a great deal of genuine local feeling against the project, and it is, in my opinion, essential that all the objections should be dealt with in detail and satisfactorily answered, otherwise a great deal of trouble lies ahead of us. In a matter of this kind, more haste may well be worse speed. It is my intention to supply some leaders of the Sambalpur district with copies of the project report, when it is ready, and also to call them to a conference when we are considering the project report. I do not think it will be any good rushing it through. This may mean certain amount of delay, but in a long run it is better to make sure of one's ground absolutely rather than to rush the matter through.

4. I may be writing to you again on the conclusion of my visit, but this is all I have to tell you for the present.

I might mention that I have written a letter to your Hon'ble Member about the project. It was prompted by a letter from Sir Purshotamdas Thakurdas, to whom Bhabha [C.H. Bhabha, Member, Department of Works, Mines and Power, Government of India] happened to mention the matter. Sir Purshotamdas said that he was writing to me at Bhabha's instance, and I thought it was just as well to thank Bhabha for his interest in the project.

11. Government Asks for an Exhaustive Project Report

Extracts from a copy of a letter by B.K. Gokhale, Secretary, Department of Works, Mines and Power, Government of India, to Governor of Orissa; 20 November 1946. File No. 34; Dr Harekrishna Mehtab Papers (1946); Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

... I entirely agree with Your Excellency that it is better to make sure of one's ground and deal exhaustively with the points raised, even if this involves delay in submission of the project report. I am accordingly asking Khosla to make his project report as complete and exhaustive as possible....



12. Local Congress MLA Demands the Project be Abandoned

Copy of a letter by Laxminarayana Mishra, MLA (Sambalpur), to the Secretary, All India Congress Committee, Camp Meerut; Camp Meerut, 20 November 1946. File No. P-18; All India Congress Committee Papers (1946); Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

*Camp Meerut,
20-11-1946.*

Comrade,

My district confronts a very grave situation at present and I do hereby invite your intervention in order to set matters right in no time. The Hirakud Dam Project of the erstwhile Government of India has not been abandoned hitherto and popular discontent has reached its climax as it were. I was an eyewitness to a procession of two lakhs of people (including 60,000 ladies) passing peacefully on the 12th instant at Sambalpur uttering strong slogans against the said project. The Orissa Government on the other hand had on the 11th instant gagged all anti-dam leaders including Sri Bodhram Dube, MLA, a member of the Constituent Assembly on Congress ticket. Besides, the said government had been bent on firing on the crowd after having refused to grant a license for the procession. At the eleventh hour my intervention did carry weight and the Premier was pleased to make a response through the issue of a permit for the historic procession of protest. The underlings however are bent on falling upon retaliation. As for the hazardous nature of the Project itself Sri Rajsewasakta M.G. Rangaya, (the Retired Chief Engineer of Mysore who was appointed Chairman of the Flood Committee by the Orissa Government themselves) has made it clear in his lengthy note of 27 pages that it should be abandoned at once. I am handing you over the report of a Geological Expert herewith too.

I have myself gone through a letter of Mahatma Gandhi in which he had pledged his word of honour to plead for the people and against the Project after the obtainment of suitable expert opinion. The opinion is already obtained, but you know Bapu's present predicament. I therefore appeal to you to forward this note of mine to Mr C.H. Bhabha, the member in charge of Works along with your favourable remarks thereon, within the shortest possible time. Mr Bhabha has got a copy of Sri Rangaya's note against the project recently. Besides, I will request you to ask Sri Harekrishna Mehtab, the Premier of Orissa to explain as to why his Government did gag Sri Bodhram Dube the Congress member of the Constituent Assembly in spite of the fact that every act of his was legal and peaceful.

Yours sincerely,
Laxminarayana Mishra, MLA,
Ex-Member of the AICC.

13. Central Government Confident of Overcoming Local Resistance

Extracts from a copy of a letter by C.H. Bhabha, Member, Department of Works, Mines and Power, Government of India, to Governor of Orissa; 22 November 1946. File No. 34; Dr Harekrishna Mehtab Papers (1946); Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

I was very glad to receive your letter of the 16th November and to note the personal interest which you are taking in the Hirakud Dam Project. I trust that your visit to Sambalpur has

resulted in clearing up a lot of unnecessary misunderstanding. Knowing the keen interest which you and your Council of Ministers are taking in this project, I have no doubt that local difficulties will be overcome in due course....

14. Clarification Sought Regarding Activities of Local Congress MLA

Extracts from a letter by C.M. Trivedi, Governor of Orissa, to Harekrishna Mehtab, Prime Minister of Orissa; Cuttack, 8 December 1946. File No. 34; Dr Harekrishna Mehtab Papers (1946); Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

*Cuttack,
8 December 1946.*

My dear Prime Minister,

I have just seen a report from the S.P. [Superintendent of Police] Sambalpur, to the effect that Pandit Luxminarayan Misra, MLA, who had been to Delhi, is telling the people in Sambalpur that he has been given an assurance by two members of the Interim Government, presumably Mr Bhabha and Dr Rajendra Prasad, that the Hirakud project will not proceed in view of Mr Rangaiya's opinion. I am certain this must be quite wrong. I am sure you will do everything that is possible to acquaint the members of the Interim Government concerned with the true position....

Yours sincerely,
C.M. Trivedi.

15. Provincial Congress Divided Over the Issue

Copy of a letter by Surendranath Dwivedi, Secretary, Utkal Provincial Congress Committee, Cuttack, to the Permanent Secretary, All India Congress Committee, Allahabad; 29 December 1946. File No. P-18; All India Congress Committee Papers (1946); Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

29.12.46.

Dear friend,

I enclose herewith a newspaper cutting [from *New Orissa*, 18 December 1946] containing the purport [report] of a letter alleged to have been written by you to Sri Laxminarayan Misra of Sambalpur. Reports are also appearing in local Oriya papers that you have authorised him to carry on agitation.

The Hirakud Dam project is a controversial subject in our province. The Congress ministry and also the Interim Government want that in the best interest of the province of Orissa, it has to be worked out. It will affect some villages and other vested interests in the district of Sambalpur, who will of course be suitably compensated by the Government after the actual figures of estimate in this connection is available.

Congressmen like Laxminarayan Misra, Bodhram Dube and Sankar Prasad Misra, etc., are carrying on tearless [fearless?] campaign against this project and in order to get support to their proposal, are fomenting district and other narrow feeling. They are even demanding a

separate province in co-operation with the rulers of certain states in Orissa, which is the very negation of the demand of Utkal Congress, i.e., the amalgamation of all Orissa states into the province of Orissa. As a result of these things, the Congress work in that district has come to a standstill condition and the Congress office is not functioning. It has become a problem with us. In these circumstances, any encouragement either directly or indirectly, given to these persons will seriously hamper the Congress work in that part of the province. I would therefore request you before expressing any opinion on subjects like these, the PCC should be consulted.

I would request you to send us a copy of the letter addressed to Sri Misra.

Yours sincerely,
Surendranath Dwivedi.

5.B CASTE

5.B.i General

1. Vallabhbhai Patel on Untouchability in India

Extracts from a news report, 'Blot of untouchability will be wiped out'. *Free Press Journal*, 17 January 1946.

Ahmedabad, January 16. Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, addressing the representatives of the local Harijan Sangh at Dr Kanuga's bungalow, said "that untouchability hampered the attainment of freedom for India. The British Government was not able to remove untouchability in spite of its 200 years' rule.

"The first work which the Congress Ministries will undertake on return to power," he added, "will be the removal of untouchability and the uplift of the Harijans. Without power what can the Congress do? The Congress Government will rigidly enforce law for the removal of untouchability."

He continued, "The untouchables are the slaves of the slaves. We ourselves are slaves and are trying to enslave our own countrymen. The Muslims are demanding separation for fear of Hindu Raj. Similarly Dr Ambedkar has tried his utmost to be separate from the Hindus. He wants separate places for Harijans in all villages and special rights for the Harijans. The British Government which has failed to protect the rights of the Harijans for the last 200 years will not stay in India for ever. To protect their rights the British are to leave India."

Ambedkar's False Tactics

"Dr Ambedkar even suggested the conversion of Harijans. I don't know what religion he follows. His aspirations for his own community are legitimate. But his methods are wrong. He was not counted before the Congress Ministries resigned and when the Congress Ministries are resuming he will not be again counted as before. His present ways are leading to a civil war between the Hindus and Harijans which will do good to none of them. The continuance of untouchability for the last 200 years is due solely to the Government.

The Baroda State has enacted good laws for the removal of untouchability. Still untouchability is prevalent even there. So long as there are officers, who believe in untouchability it is bound to remain in its present form. When the Congress comes to power it will not

tolerate such officers. The poison which Dr Ambedkar spreads will ultimately prove ruinous to the Harijans....

2. Conference of Delhi Provincial Scheduled Castes' Federation

News report, 'Harijans want power'. *Statesman*, 4 February 1946.

It would be difficult for the untouchables to get their due share of political power once it passed on to the Hindus, asserted Dr B.R. Ambedkar in Delhi on Sunday evening.

Addressing the conference of the Delhi Provincial Scheduled Castes Federation, the Labour Member said that 25 years ago the status of Muslims "was not much better than that of the untouchables." With the backing of the British, however, the Muslims had been able to effect enormous improvement in their status and at present "none dared challenge their rights."

In spite of their unbroken loyalty to the British, added Dr Ambedkar, the Harijans had not been backed by the British to the same extent as the Muslims had been. The result was that Harijans had to rely upon themselves for the amelioration of their condition.

Having neither the religious leadership of the Brahmins nor the economic pull of the *banias*, the untouchables could hope to improve their lot only through political power. The "scattered community of untouchable must achieve *sanghatan* if it is to attain political power."

The conference passed a resolution condemning the "coercion, intimidation and all sorts of inhuman treatment" meted out to Harijans to force them to vote for the Congress. Another resolution protested against the recent lathi charges on "innocent and helpless processionists" at Bombay and Nagpur and demanded an inquiry into the incidents.

3. Scheduled Castes' Federation's Election Campaign

Extracts from 'Letters addressed and replies received thereto and speeches delivered from time to time by B.R. Ambedkar', compiled by Nanak Chand Rattu; Madras, 5 March 1946. File No. 1-3 (Roll No. 1); B.R. Ambedkar Papers (1946); Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

If the Congress felt that the demands of the Scheduled Castes were unjust, let the matter be referred to an impartial international tribunal and he would abide by the decision, said Dr B.R. Ambedkar, inaugurating the election campaign of the Scheduled Castes Federation at Naru Park, Bombay, on Sunday evening.

In the Swaraj for which the Congress is shouting, he said, the Hindus would take the place of British in dominating the nation....

A gathering of 70,000 men and women loudly cheered Dr Ambedkar when he rose to inaugurate the election campaign.

Admission to the meeting was by tickets and the gate money amounting to Rs 17,000 was presented to Dr Ambedkar for the campaign. Mr G.M. Jadhav, President of the Federation's Bombay Branch, announced that the target aimed at for the campaign fund was Rs 50,000 and would be reached by May....

Dr Ambedkar added they were prepared to make every sacrifice in the attainment of their object. Let not the Congress or any other political organisation try to frighten them. During the primary elections to the Legislative Assembly in Bombay a Scheduled Caste voter was

killed. Dr Ambedkar fastened the responsibility for the death on the Congress and condemned the police lathi charges on the funeral procession of the murdered voter....

4. Fast to Open Venugopalaswami Temple, Mulepetta (Andhra), to *Dalits*

News report, 'Fast for temple-entry'. *Free Press Journal*, 12 March 1946.

Nellore, March 11. Mr Potti Sreeramulu, formerly a member of the Sabarmati Ashram, is fasting from March 7 in front of the Venugopalaswami Temple at Mulepetta as a protest against the delay on the part of the Managing Trustees of the temple to open the temple for Harijans.—UP.

5. Scheduled Castes' Federation and the Congress

Extracts from a news report, 'Ambedkar saboteur of freedom struggle'. *Free Press Journal*, 2 April 1946.

Nasik, April 1. "Instead of serving the cause of the untouchables, Dr B.R. Ambedkar and his lackeys have done everything in their power to injure Scheduled Castes' interest," observes Mr A.D. Rankhambe (who was recently returned to the Bombay Legislative Assembly on the Congress ticket defeating his Ambedkarite rival) in a statement issued to the press.

Mr Rankhambe says: "I am told Amritrao Rankhambe has secured a Congress ticket. The Municipality issues a dog's pass. The pass shows who is the owner of the dog. The Congress ticket is like this pass."

"This is what Dr B.R. Ambedkar said at Manmad in a public speech. Dr Ambedkar has acquired unenviable notoriety for his flair for scurrilous attacks against and foul abuse of his political opponents. But ironically enough, he is actually describing himself, because he was a nominated member of the Bombay Council in 1935. Later, the British Government included him in the Viceregal Executive Council."

"Apparently, Dr Ambedkar is suffering from the guilt complex. What can we expect from one who is carrying the pass of British Imperialism around his neck?"

A Stumbling Block

"Instead of serving the cause of the untouchables, Dr Ambedkar and his lackeys have done everything in their power to injure their interest. Inspired by a rabid hatred of Mahatma Gandhi and the Indian National Congress, they have tried to block the Indian freedom struggle with the successful culmination of which the fate of the untouchables is bound up. He has tried to sabotage the struggle and combat the progressive ideas amongst the untouchables....

6. Scheduled Castes' Federation Threatens Direct Action

Extracts from a news report, 'Scheduled castes threaten direct action'. *Hindustan Times*, 5 June 1946.

Bombay, June 4. In a 2000-word resolution, the Working Committee of the All-India Scheduled Castes' Federation, calls upon His Majesty's Government and the Labour Party in England to

take up the cause of Scheduled Castes in right earnest and ratify immediately the wrong done to them by the Cabinet Mission. "Failing this," says the resolution, "the Working Committee feels that there will be no alternative for the Scheduled Castes but to resort to direct action."

The resolution further says, "If circumstances require such a direct action to save the Scheduled Castes from the impending catastrophe, the Working Committee will not hesitate to ask the Scheduled Castes to do so." ...

7. *Dalits* Feel Betrayed by Cabinet Mission's Award

Extracts from a news report, 'Abject betrayal of depressed classes'. *Bombay Chronicle*, 8 June 1946.

Nagpur, June 6. In a comprehensive memorandum to the Cabinet Mission on their proposals Mr G.A. Gavai, General Secretary of the All India Depressed Classes Association after asserting that the scheduled castes form an important element in the body politic of the country says. "It is difficult to condemn too strongly the perfunctory or callous manner in which the Cabinet Mission treated the 70 million depressed classes of India. History can present hardly any parallel to such as abject betrayal of a class who for centuries have been denied elementary rights of citizenship."

The Cabinet Mission has not one word to say with regard to what would or should be the position of the depressed classes in the new dispensation. This rouses grave doubts as to the impartial approach of the Mission to the future constitutional arrangements for India. The depressed classes must therefore raise a voice of protest against this "betrayal of their interests by the Cabinet Mission."

Mr Gavai demands an early abrogation of the Poona Pact and joint electorates with reservation of seats...API.

8. B.R. Ambedkar Explains Poona Satyagraha

News report, 'Ambedkar to carry on fight to the end'. *Free Press Journal*, 22 July 1946.

Poona, July 21. The satyagraha launched in Poona by the Scheduled Castes' Federation was not the work of madmen, if they were mad there was method in their madness and purpose too, observed Dr B.R. Ambedkar, President of the Federation explaining the purpose of the satyagraha to pressmen this evening.

This satyagraha, he continued, would be an abject lesson to Mahatma Gandhi, who considered himself the only graduate in satyagraha.

He further indicated that they would carry on the fight to the very bitter end, but on the moral plane. Even if their moral resources were exhausted, he observed, they would not resort to any other means. Dr Ambedkar observed, "our tactics will depend upon the tactics of the Opposition, [and] the Bombay Government."

Dr Ambedkar, who came here this afternoon left for Bombay this evening, after visiting some of the camps of the satyagrahis.

During the press conference, Dr Ambedkar attacked Mahatma Gandhi, Premier B.G. Kher, and the Congress-minded Harijans whom he characterised as "men actually picked up from the gutter" and "selected from the scum of society, men with no purpose, no intellect and no

capacity.” These Congress Harijans, according to him, had never devoted an hour of their life to the service of community. He regretted such people who were “mere tools and stooges” should have been elected by Congress as representatives of the Congress.

He was of the opinion that the Congress had done nothing for the Harijans and observed “Why should I be dependent upon the goodwill of somebody else? Give me power to do good to myself. Why do you want to do good to me? I want mutton cutlets, but you give me only *bhaji*.”

Dr Ambedkar deprecated that the leaders of the Congress should have been there as leaders of the country for the past thirty years. The Indian people had forgotten that their country was greater than the leaders. But in a country like ours, “morbid, thoughtless and irrational,” such things were bound to happen.

Sorry State of Affairs

Premier Kher also came in for severe attack, Dr Ambedkar criticised the statement made by the Premier at the press conference on Friday on the Scheduled Castes satyagraha. What the Premier had said was an enigma to him. But in the next sentence he remarked it was a sorry state of affairs that the Prime Minister of the province should not have sufficient intellect to understand such a simple matter as this.

Explaining the purpose of the satyagraha launched by the Federation he stated the Cabinet Mission had decided wrongly and very inequitably that the Muslims and the Caste Hindus alone should be heirs to their power of authority and sovereignty. Since the Caste Hindus had the right to sovereignty and right to decide constitutional issues they wanted a declaration from the Congress as to how they proposed to dispose of the 60 million Scheduled Castes and how they proposed to protect and safeguard the interests of his community. Asked, when their grievance was against the British Cabinet why did not the Federation launch satyagraha in Delhi during the negotiations, Dr Ambedkar replied that “the British Cabinet became so fond of Gandhiji and fell in love with him so much that they would not [have] even looked at them [Scheduled Castes’ Federation]”.

In a Temper

When asked why, when their grievance was against the Congress, they should launch satyagraha against the Bombay Government and interrupt the Assembly proceedings, Dr Ambedkar replied that the Bombay Government was part and parcel of the Congress. Referring to the latter part of [the] question he cried out, “Let the Assembly proceedings go to blazes. We are not concerned with it. Disturbance to Assembly proceedings is nothing to us.”

Dr Ambedkar also indicated that neither he nor his colleagues on the Working Committee of the Scheduled Castes Federation wished to court imprisonment; but if they were locked up their movement would be crushed down. And they were not fools to do such things, he concluded.

No Quarrel With League

Dr Ambedkar also attacked the Hindu Maha Sabha, Student Organisations, the Communists and Socialists for not having joined in their struggle, which he maintained was a struggle for Freedom and Liberty. He also indicated they had no quarrel with the Muslims and they had decided not to launch satyagraha in the Punjab and Bengal.

The API [Associated Press of India] adds: It was wrong, however, to say, Dr Ambedkar continued, that a sense of frustration had been created in the minds of the Scheduled Castes. They had scored cent per cent victories though they have lost cent per cent seats.

"There would have been frustration if the scheduled Castes had voted against our candidates, and for the Congress nominees. That would have been our ruination. But not over four per cent voted in favour of the Congress candidates who had been returned on Caste Hindu votes. That was not our defeat but triumph. But the fact that we lost these elections did not mean that we are going to lose them every time.

Elections And Cricket

"Elections," he said "are like Quadrangular Cricket matches where the Hindus win one year and Parsis next year."

Poona Pact

Turning to the demands of the Scheduled Castes, Dr Ambedkar said, one of them was the abrogation of the Poona Pact.

"Why should we not agitate against it," he asked. "No treaty in the world is accepted as sacrosanct. The Poona Pact has resulted in the political disenfranchisement of the very people in whose interests it was made. What we are asking for is that the deliberate opinion of one community should not be nullified by that of another community. In the primary elections, wherever held in the country, no Congressman won against the Federation candidate. But in the general elections, the candidates selected by their community were rejected and 'stooges' and 'tools' of another party came on top because of Caste Hindu votes."

Dr Ambedkar demanded that any arrangement made for the political protection of their community must be "fool-proof and knave-proof."

9. Scheduled Castes to Become Muslim Converts?

Extracts from a news report, 'Ambedkar parades as Congress benefactor'. *Bombay Chronicle*, 25 July 1946.

Bombay, Wednesday. The threat that he had many surprises up his sleeves and would, when the 'right' time came, unleash deadlier moral weapons to storm the citadel of the "Hindu-Congress heirs to British power" was made by Dr B.R. Ambedkar, President of the All India Scheduled Classes Federation, in the course of a 60 minute chat with the *Bombay Chronicle* representative this evening.....

Benefactor of Congress

"Could not I and my community decide to become Muslim converts? If I adopt Mr Jinnah's religion I will not stand to lose in any measure and, indeed, he might nominate me as a Muslim member to the Executive Council. I have not taken that drastic step because I want to save the Congress from total degeneration," he averred....

Plea For Satisfactory Blueprint

"Should the Congress issue a thoroughly satisfactory blueprint, would you be prepared to call upon your followers to join that body?" Dr Ambedkar was asked next.

“Certainly not,” he replied. “We are more radically inclined, socially and politically, than the Congress. We represent the poorest of the poor. We are sons of the soil, the true masses. As such, we cannot contemplate joining a pseudo-socialist organisation as the Congress.”

However, if the Congress made a square deal to the Scheduled Classes, and was ready to launch on a “real” struggle for the resurgence of the country, he would unhesitatingly offer his co-operation.

Dr Ambedkar denied he had said in his Poona press conference that his party had been given any assurances from the Muslim League in any form and on any issue. His unwillingness to start *satyagraha* campaigns in the ‘Muslim’ provinces proceeded from the premise that the Muslim had done no harm to the Scheduled Classes.

Votes Won But Seats Lost!

In an allusion to the fate of the Scheduled Class candidates in the recent general elections, he maintained that there was no real trial of strength. His men had won all the votes but lost the seats because “Hindus” votes helped to swamp their chances.

“We are fighting for our liberty, for our very existence,” Dr Ambedkar feelingly observed towards the end. “We, a large community, have been denied elementary justice for decades. We have been maltreated, our just demands brushed aside with contempt. No chord of sympathy has been touched from any quarter. What we ask for is justice and fair play. Let us have it or, by God, the consequences would be terrible as none could picture.”

10. Communist Party of India and the *Dalit* Movement

Editorial, ‘Scheduled Caste satyagraha’. *People’s Age*, 28 July 1946.

The Bombay Provincial Scheduled Castes’ Federation has launched a satyagraha campaign in Poona from July 15, the date on which the Bombay Assembly opened. The object of this campaign is apparently to remedy “the grave injustice” done by the Cabinet Mission to the Scheduled Castes by declining to recognise them as ‘minority’ requiring statutory protection.

Under ministerial instruction Section 144 has been declared in the locality near the Assembly Hall. Meetings and processions are banned, and those who break the bans are promptly arrested. The total number of arrests so far exceeds seven hundred-many of whom have been sentenced to pay a fine or have been imprisoned for a fortnight.

The use of Section 144 and the banning of meetings and processions have now become the usual weapon of the Bombay Ministry in dealing with any mass-action, howsoever justified. Meetings have been shamelessly banned, in strikes, workers have been prohibited from entering the strike areas in order to facilitate strike-breaking.

It is no wonder, therefore, that the same weapon should be used against the Scheduled Castes’s demonstration even before it had begun and when the leaders undertook to maintain its peaceful character. It is criminal that Ministry of National Congress should be guilty of such scant respect for people’s rights.

National Movement’s Failure to Tackle Problem

The satyagraha of the Untouchable men and women practised in Poona and Lucknow reveals the skeleton in the Indian cupboard. It comes as a reminder that the problem of the many millions of Indian serfs has yet to be solved.

The problem has, in recent times, developed into riots, murderous lootings and stabbings—for which the main responsibility must lie on the heads of many irresponsible Congress leaders, who during the elections went on vomiting fire against the Untouchables and their leaders.

The bitterness created in these riots, the failure of the Scheduled Castes at the polls, their defeat in Bombay and the CP on the strength of non-Scheduled Caste votes—all these find expression today in the developing satyagraha.

The biggest factor, however, is the failure of the National Movement to offer adequate guarantees for the liberation of the Untouchables, and develop an economic programme which will convince everybody that the National Movement is determined to put an end to the present state of affairs, free the Untouchables from economic bondage to the Caste Hindus.

While it is these factors that determine the mass response to the call of the Scheduled Caste leaders, the politics of their leaders lead them in the wrong direction. It is patent that the final liberation of the Untouchables can come only through a thorough social revolution and uprooting of the imperialist system. Yet all these years, the politics of the leaders have been one of reliance on the British to do justice to the Untouchables, which has done immense harm to the cause of Untouchables themselves.

Wrong Politics of Untouchable Leaders

Today Dr Ambedkar says that the British have betrayed the pledges given to the Untouchables and he has lost faith in them. The advanced working-class movement had repeatedly warned the Untouchables that the British were only exploiting their leaders for their own end. Now at last let the leaders realise that to put faith in the British is to betray the Untouchables.

The satyagraha of the Untouchables, the leaders say, arises out of the Cabinet Mission's proposals.

But the Cabinet Mission's proposals do not harm only the Untouchables. They constitute a conspiracy against the people of India, against the oppressed workers, peasants, Untouchable masses. They are meant to form an alliance of Indian oppressors against the oppressed and retain British domination.

If the Untouchable leaders are serious about fighting this plan, they must join hands with the workers and peasants, who all are opposed to the plan; with the Communist Party whose representatives will expose the plan in the Constituent assembly and fight it outside. Let them help the mass strikes of the workers out of which will develop a new movement against the treacherous plan. Only by forging a common front with the other sections of the masses and directing it against imperialism, and putting demands for fundamental rights of Untouchables, will the Untouchable masses defeat the plan.

Joint Struggle with Workers and Peasants—Only Way

But the fact is that like the leaders of the Congress, the leaders of the Federation want to work the plan and compromise with the British. Their present satyagraha is only for the statutory status of a minority within the framework of the plan. Such satyagraha, therefore, cannot get the support of those who seek to defeat the plan itself.

The question of Untouchables cannot be solved by the aid of 'minority status' alone. Neither the programme of the Congress nor the programme of the Federation, which refuses to participate in the freedom struggle, will lead to the liberation of the millions of the oppressed.

While the Communist Party of India stands for adequate representation of Untouchables in the legislatures and for other immediate rights and ailities for them. It is equally convinced that the liberation of millions of Untouchables can only be achieved through the common struggle of workers and peasants against the British rulers, against the present plan and the present social system

Such a struggle will guarantee rights of equal citizenship, give land to the Untouchables, guarantee their rights in other directions and see that they are enforced.

That is the direction in which the Untouchables' movement must move for final emancipation.

11. Renunciation of Titles by Scheduled Castes' Federation Members

News report, 'Title renunciation spreads'. *Free Press Journal*, 27 August 1946.

Poona, August 26. The Working Committee of the All India Scheduled Castes' Federation, at its meeting held in Poona during the weekend, has called upon its followers to renounce their titles, and not accept any, in future, as a protest of the British Government towards the Scheduled Castes.

The Committee has decided to continue the Satyagraha. Satyagraha is essential, says the resolution, if the Scheduled Castes' cause is to triumph. Giving details of Satyagraha movements, and [their] mode and manner, the Committee impresses upon all its followers to observe discipline and absolute non-violence. The Working Committee, further greeted and congratulated those people who had taken part in Poona, Lucknow and Cawnpore and other Satyagrahas.

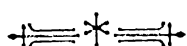
The Committee in its resolution, regarding the formation of the Interim Government, observes that it is not entitled to any obedience or respect from the Scheduled Castes, as according to the Committee, the Congress has betrayed the Scheduled Castes, by not giving them proper representation and has called upon Dr Jagjivan Ram, not to accept the invitation of the Congress unless adequate representation is granted to the community.

Gandhiji Criticised

Describing Gandhiji's statement in the *Harijan*, that the Scheduled Castes [are] not a minority, as a somersault from his 1939 statement the committee warns Gandhiji that he and he alone, will be responsible for all the growing estrangement between the Hindus and the Scheduled Castes, and that such estrangement would continue so long as Gandhiji continued in the path of deceiving himself, Hindus and the Scheduled Castes.

The Working Committee has called upon the Prime Minister of Great Britain to make a public announcement that while making a treaty with the Indian Government, they would examine whether the safeguards provided for the Scheduled Castes were essential enough for their protection and development.

Dewan Bahadur N. Shivaraj, President of the Federation announced at a public meeting his decision to renounce the title "Dewan Bahadur".



12. Congress and the *Dalits*

Letter by Vallabhbhai Patel to B.R. Ambedkar; New Delhi, 1 September 1946. File No. 8; All India Trade Union Congress Papers (1946); Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

*New Delhi,
1 September 1946*

Dear Dr Ambedkar,

I have already acknowledged receipt of your letter of the 12th August, I am only today able to deal with it and I wish to be excused for the delay owing to pressure of work here. Allow me to assure you that I have given most anxious consideration to your proposals.

In the middle of July last, Shri N.M. Joshi met me and suggested that as you were anxious for a settlement with the Congress, it would be better if we could meet. You will remember that when you and Shri Joshi met on the 18th July at my place, he suggested a formula, contained in the Sapru Report, to be taken as a basis for settlement. This formula proposes the continuance of panel elections, provided in the Poona Pact, with certain alterations. You were not in favour of revival of the system of panel elections, which had already disappeared by the expiry of 10 years period provided in the Poona Pact, on the ground that the Scheduled Castes were too poor to contest double elections. It was agreed that we should think over the matter and meet again at some other convenient date, as I was confined to bed at that time.

You have now sent me a long memorandum proposing (1) Amplifications of, (2) Alterations in and (3) Additions to the Poona Pact. All the points in the memorandum will have to be carefully examined by the Advisory Committee which is to be appointed by the Constituent Assembly at its preliminary meeting in accordance with paras 19 and 20 of the Cabinet Delegation's statement of May 16.

Many points in the memorandum depend upon the nature of the constitution and the distribution of powers, functions and finances between the various sections, for instance, the Provincial constitutions will be settled by the sections and the Congress will not be in a majority in Sections B and C. The formation of Group governments may restrict the scope of the Union Centre to very narrow limits and it may have no power to interfere with the Provincial and Group governments with reference to the Scheduled Castes.

On going through your memorandum, I feel that our approach to the whole question is different. This Congress aims at the assimilation of the Scheduled Castes into the general Hindu community and proposes to take all possible measures to secure that end, while your present proposals indicate that you still intend to provide safeguards which would perpetuate the separation of the Scheduled Castes from the general Hindu community.

Of course, I am always willing to meet you and be convinced of any error of judgment the Congress may have made. No human institution can claim infallibility for itself. I can, however, give you this assurance that the Congress has never wished willfully to damage the interests of the Scheduled Castes but I must not conceal from you the suspicion with which I and other Congressmen have viewed your activities. Your language has often been highly provocative and inflammatory and you have been reckless in your statements against the Congress and its great leader, Mahatma Gandhi. So far as I am aware, hardly any of the charges hurled by you against the Congress would bear impartial scrutiny.

If, therefore, you can convince me to the contrary, please do come. I am willing to listen and discuss. Naturally the Congress would be glad to enlist your great ability for the promotion of what must be and is common cause between you and the Congress.

Yours sincerely,
Vallabhbhai Patel.

13. B.R. Ambedkar Uncertain of Congress Attitude Towards *Dalits*

Letter by B.R. Ambedkar to N.M. Joshi; Bombay, 12 September 1946.
File No. 8; All India Trade Union Congress Papers (1946); Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

Bombay,
12 September 1946.

My dear Joshiji,

I have received a letter from Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel in which he has expressed his reactions regarding the memorandum which I submitted to him on the question of the safeguards for the Scheduled Castes. Mr Patel's letter is not, in my judgment, very encouraging and the prospect of a settlement does not seem to me to be promising. I am somewhat surprised at the wholesale condemnation of my proposals especially when I had put as the third alternative for the electoral system a proposal which he himself told you was likely to be acceptable. If he is opposed to everyone of the three alternatives I have suggested, I do not see what advantage there can be in my seeing him. Before finalising my action on his letter, I thought as in duty to you that I should acquaint you with the situation that has arisen and to request you for advice if you care to give any. I do not know whether you would care to get into contact with Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel in Delhi and to find out whether the letter represents his final attitude in the matter or whether it is merely a preliminary shot of a person who is nursing a personal grievance against me for my attitude towards the Congress and Mr Gandhi. You are of course free to decide upon the best course to get at the truth. What I am anxious to know from you is what you think would be the proper course for me to pursue.

Yours sincerely,
B.R. Ambedkar.

14. Muslim League Selects a *Dalit* for the Interim Government

News report, 'Service to the nation, Mr Mandal's aim'. *Free Press Journal*, 17 October 1946.

Calcutta, October 16. The selection by the Muslim League of Mr Jogendra Nath Mandal for the Interim Government, which surprised many persons here, was a closely guarded secret.

Mr Mandal received the intimation of the selection on Monday through Khwaja Nazimuddin who is a member of the League Working Committee. Immediately, Mr Mandal, who is a member of the All-India Scheduled Castes Federation, sent word to Dr Ambedkar in Bombay, seeking his approval to his joining the Interim Government. But according to information received here, Dr Ambedkar had already proceeded to England.

The *Free Press of India* correspondent asked Mr Mandal if he would wait for Dr Ambedkar's permission before actually taking up the post. Mr Mandal replied that would not be necessary as he expected Dr Ambedkar's approval without difficulty. Mr Mandal also said that he discussed the new situation with the Bengal Premier today.

Whatever might have been the plans of Mr Suhrawardy in regard to the reconstitution of the Bengal Ministry, Mr Mandal's transference to the Centre has certainly afforded Mr Suhrawardy an opportunity to take this step without delay. Perhaps a change in the timetable is now contemplated.

Service to Indians

Interviewed by the *Free Press of India* Mr Mandal said, "I shall be able to render better service not only to the Scheduled Castes but also to the people of India irrespective of caste and creed. I shall be in the Interim Government as representative of the ALL-India Scheduled Castes' Federation and as such I hope to get the support of all the Scheduled Castes."

Mr Mandal further said: "I believe the Scheduled Castes of India are the followers of the Scheduled Castes Federation and its leader, Dr Ambedkar. The Congress secured a large number of seats of the Scheduled Castes in the last provincial assembly elections only due to the Poona Pact which provided joint electorate for the Scheduled Castes. That was, in fact, no indication of the Scheduled Castes' adherence to the Congress. That fact has been clearly demonstrated by courting of arrest and imprisonment by a very large number of the Scheduled Castes, who carried on satyagraha against the Congress Government at Poona and Nagpur.

Mission's Wound Healed

Mr Mandal added: "I am grateful to the Muslim League and its leader, Mr Jinnah for his offering a seat to the Scheduled Castes' Federation out of the League's quota. I feel that the grave injustice done to the Scheduled Castes by the British Cabinet Mission and the Congress has been undone to a great extent by this act of the Muslim League."

15. Harijan Sevak Sangh Wants Entry Opened to Dakore Temple, Gujarat

Letter by A.V. Thakkar, General Secretary, Harijan Sevak Sangh, Delhi, to Purshotamdas Thakurdas, Bombay; Camp Sodepur, Calcutta, 4 November 1946. File No. 322; Purshotamdas Thakurdas Papers (1946); Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

*Camp Sodepur, Calcutta,
4 November 1946.*

Dear Sir Pursohottam Das,

You may have read in the *Harijan* of 27 Oct. 1946 the para headed "What about Dakore?" Lest it may have escaped your notice I quote below:

"A friend from the Kheda District who keeps *bhangi* men and women in his house as his own brothers and sisters, writes: 'Big temples in Madras are being thrown open to Harijans. Is it not strange that deluded Gujarat should not throw open the Dakore temple? If the deluded Gujaratis become sane, Dakore temple can be thrown open today. But if Gujarat must find joy

in hugging a shameful custom, who can prevent her?' On the Trustees of the Dakore temple rests a heavy responsibility." New Delhi, 18.10'46, M.K.G.

I am requesting your attention to this because with regard to opening of Hindu temples to Harijan Hindus, the south is moving fast. The famous temples of Meenakshi at Madura and of Subramanyam at Palni are already opened, not to mention the famous Padmanath temple in Trivandrum. Efforts are now going on to open the famous temples of Thirupatni and Shrirangam and friends [friends] in the South. I hope that it would not be long before these are opened. Even the most orthodox Cochin State is now responding very well, by some private temples having been already opened and the present Maharaja being very favourable to the temple entry campaign.

You, Sir, are the chief trustee of Dakore temple, the most famous temple of Gujarat. Is it too much to expect that you will try your utmost to have it declared open to Harijans? With your pertinacity, you can achieve it, I am confident.

Yours sincerely,
A.V. Thakkar.

16. Caste Discrimination Banned by Bengal Religious Bodies

News report, 'Hindu society to be shorn of caste'. *Free Press Journal*, 13 November 1946.

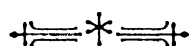
Calcutta, November 12. Twenty-one pundits and scholars of Hindu culture, representing six, religious bodies in Bengal, have issued a declaration banning unequivocally any discrimination or 'degradation' by reason of caste distinctions in Hindu society.

This "unambiguous declaration of rights and privileges of all persons belonging to the Hindu fold" says:

- (1) There shall be no distinction between the social rights and privileges of the different castes in the Hindus community;
- (2) Each Hindu, irrespective of caste, shall have the right of entry into all temples and places of worship. Entry into individual or family-owned temples and places of worship shall be subject to the consent of the owners;
- (3) Barbers, washermen and other similar social workers to serve all Hindus irrespective of caste;
- (4) All Brahmins may act as priests of any Hindu, irrespective of caste, for worship of other religious ceremonies without suffering social degradation.

The signatories include Mr Justice Bijan Kumar Mukhopadhyay of the Calcutta High Court, who is also President of the Sanskrit Association, Mahaohopadhyaya Bidhy Sekhar Shastri and Shrijib Yayatirtha, both ardent Sanatanists who had vehemently opposed the Sarda Act in the early thirties.

Following this declaration, the Hindu student's hostel of the Vidyasagar College today employed a sweeper and a cobbler to serve the meals.



17. Congress and Andhra Harijan Sevak Sangh Organise Temple Entry Day

Extracts from 'Letters addressed and replies received there to and speeches delivered from time to time by B.R. Ambedkar', compiled by Nanak Chand Rattu; Madras, 22 December 1946. File No. 1-3 (Roll No. 1); B.R. Ambedkar Papers (1946); Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

Mr K. Koti Reddy, Minister for Hindu Religious Endowments, in the course of a statement, says:

I am glad that the Andhra Harijan Sevak Sangh supported by the Andhra Provincial Congress Committee has organised Harijan Temple-Entry Day throughout the whole of Andhra Desa on December 24, 1946. I do not think that God who according to Hindu Shastras is all-pervading, can ever be considered to be against the worship of Him by any Hindu at any place including the temples. It is sacrilegious to attribute to God any distinctions between one human being and another and all these distinctions are certainly man-made and not ordained by God. I feel, therefore, that the denial of worship of god in the Hindu temple by Harijans cannot be justified on any ground. I am also convinced that the general mass of worshippers are not depriving this privilege, rather the right of worship in the temple to our Harijan brethren [sic]. I am fortified in this opinion by the enthusiasm that the public have been showing recently in allowing Harijans into Hindu temples.

Mr Koti Reddi adds: The people have been so enthusiastic that recently some important temples have been thrown open without obtaining permission from the Government which would be necessary in order to identify them from possible civil or criminal proceedings against them. The Government is contemplating the form of legislation as to how best to give effect to this wave of enthusiasm of the people to treat our Harijan brethren as our equals in the matter of temple-entry also.

18. Separate Electorates Demanded for Scheduled Castes

Extracts from 'Letters addressed and replies received thereto and speeches delivered from time to time by B. Ambedkar', compiled by Nanak Chand Rattu; Bombay, 20 November 1946. File No. 1-3 (Roll No. 1); B.R. Ambedkar Papers (1946); Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

"All that the Scheduled Castes want are political safeguards, over which there can hardly be any dispute," he [B.R. Ambedkar] said. "The principal demand of the Scheduled Castes is that they must have separate electorates, the reason being that without separate electorates all other political safeguards that might be granted to them are useless...."

19. Scheduled Castes' Federation's Terms to Join Freedom Struggle

News report, 'Give us share of power, and we shall fight for freedom'. *Free Press Journal*, 27 December 1946.

Nagpur, December 26. What would be the share of the Scheduled Castes in the political power of a free India? "If this is found to satisfy us and meet our demands, we will join hands

with Congressmen," said Mr J.N. Mandal, Law Member in the Interim Government, speaking here last night.

Evil days, warned Mr Mandal awaited the Caste Hindus if they did not change their outlook, as the Scheduled Castes refused anymore to submit to the despotic rule of high-Caste Hindus.

Mr Mandal was speaking at the All-India Scheduled Castes Students Conference, he referred to the recent communal troubles in many parts of the country and the prevalent tension and asked the members of his community to maintain the peaceful atmosphere.

"We should not be aggressive, but we must be always prepared to defend ourselves. I cannot see why any community should kill or torture us."

The viewpoint of the Scheduled Castes Federation, the "only representative body" of his community. Mr Mandal said was that "we have no quarrel with any party. We demand our legitimate rights and we look upon those who accept our demand as our friends."

GIVE CONCESSIONS

The Law Member criticized the Congress attitude and said, "The Congress is not prepared to give anything to the Scheduled Castes. But if any other party gave out of its share some concession to us the Congress leaders feel enraged at this concession. How can we accept the Congress assurances about future of our community under the new constitution?"

The Constituent Assembly is now engaged in the task of framing a constitution for India. He asked the Congress leaders to declare even now what would be the share of the Scheduled Castes in the political power of a free India. "If this is found to satisfy us and meet our demands we will join hands with Congressmen."

Not Communal

Mr Mandal repudiated the contention that, their organisation was communal. "We are struggling to secure just rights for seven crores of people constituting the backward population in India. I firmly believe we are now passing through a transitional period and all parties are fighting for their rights, No one can find fault with us if the members of the Scheduled Castes through their organisation strove for an honourable existence in a free India of the future."—API.

20. Indian Social Congress' Appeal to United Nations Organisation

Extracts from an undated pamphlet, 'The Indian Problem: Solution Suggested', by the Indian Social Congress, Lahore. File No. C-90; All India Hindu Mahasabha Papers (1946); Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

IV. Hindu imperialism like its Japanese progeny is a greater enemy of modern democracy than British imperialism, and must be replaced by a democratic scheme of life under pressure of world opinion.

(a) The most serious aspect of the Indian problem is the supreme necessity to emancipate the people from their own ancient superstitions and tyrannies. In this respect the United Nations are faced with a task similar to and as stupendous as the one which confronts them in Japan.

(b) The two Imperialisms, the Hindu and the Japanese, are inspired by the same forces and guided by the same technique. A person or persons who, by divine right, are superior to all other human beings and worthy of worship are the supreme masters of the people—the Hirohitos in Japan and the Brahmans in India. A gang of military barons or Rajas owing implicit obedience to the divine Emperor in Japan and to the divine Brahmans, their scriptures

and temples in India are the autocratic rulers of the people. The national wealth is concentrated in the hands of a few landlords, business magnates or Zamindars or Banias who like the Rajas are staunch guardians of the imperialistic regimes. In both India and Japan the women are virtual slaves of the men. "The priest is everything, the prince is little and the people are nothing." Crushing poverty, impenetrable ignorance, appalling ill health, humiliations of caste and untouchability are the lot of the numberless millions of people.

(c) Britain's great blunder and crime in India is that she wedded herself to the Brahman Hirohitos, she joined hands with the medieval barons, the puppet Rajas, and she made common cause with the landlords and capitalists and consigned the trusting millions to utter poverty, ignorance, disease and shame—all in order to facilitate her exploitation of the manpower and natural resources of the country. Today the same Caste Hindu Leaders, Rajas and Capitalists are behind the revolt against Britain, and are planning to reestablish Ram Raj, which is only another name for Hindu Imperialism. Britain's next hope is to come to an agreement with her old allies and co-exploiters, the Caste Hindus, the Rajas and the Capitalists. The world will soon see enacted in India the comic spectacle of avowed leaders of British labour parleying with the cruel enemies of Indian labour; Britain, one of the five Great Powers of the world, who have pledged themselves to wipe out Nazism and establish democracy, conjuring up in India more terrible Nazi States than those of Germany and Japan. If the United Nations do not intervene at the present juncture they will be obliged to do so under more tragic circumstances in the not distant future.

(d) The complete failure of Mahatma Gandhi and the Congress to win the confidence of the Muslims and the Scheduled Castes, the menace of the Hindu Mahasabha and the Brahman rearmament movement under the leadership of Sir S.P. Ramaswamy, the cry of Hindustan with its implied opposition to the non-communal name India, the tenacious clinging of the Rajas to their divine right, the absence of any party in India which has adopted the abolition of castes as a plank of its policy, the fanatical opposition of the Hindus, Mahatma Gandhi and the Congress to the natural and legitimate claims of the Scheduled Castes, the mean opposition of Hindu men to the simple reforms suggested by the Hindu Code Committee of the Government of India, the treacherous effort made by the Brahman leaders of the Punjab to capture the religious institutions of the Hindus and to reimpose upon them the humiliations of castes, cow-worship and Brahman worship through the medium of the Punjab Legislature; the rising tide of superstition and idol worship studiously promulgated by Mahatma Gandhi's much advertised fasts, prayers, silence, asceticism, Ram Nam and other paraphernalia of ancient Hindu priestcraft, culminating in his deification recently in a temple demonstrating in eloquent of the helpless idols and exploiting Sannyasins who throng Hindu streets all over India and his patriotic followers to the position of blind worshippers and prostrating Chelas; all these and a hundred other manifestation of Hindu incorrigibility are a warning to the world.

If any concrete example of what would happen under Hindu Raj were necessary, it is furnished by the recent developments in Travancore where under the astute leadership of a reincarnate Peshwa is going on a fanatical revival of all the wicked features of Ram Raj or Brahman Raj. The enthroning of a puppet monarch who is held out as an incarnation of God, promulgation of the theory of the dedication of the State to the temple, the Brahman and their gods, the suppression of all democratic forces, the setting of caste against caste and community against community, the studied persecution of the Christians, the concentration of dictatorial powers in the Brahman minister, the reconsolidation of the Brahman community to meet the challenge of democracy, these and other traditional tactics of Hindu Raj well exemplified in

the empires of Sivaji and of Vijayanagar, are being ruthlessly prosecuted by a master-dictator in Travancore behind the smoke screen of British overlordship.

The United Nations Organisation must seriously consider if they can permit Britain to hand over India as a prey to the forces of Hindu Imperialism and Nazism or should take upon itself the task of leading her people to democratic freedom....

5.B.ii Central Provinces and Berar

1. Trouble Between Caste Hindus and Mahars

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for the Central Provinces and Berar for the second half of March 1946. File No. 18/3/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Political

In Nagpur, feelings between the Scheduled Castes and the Textile Workers' Union continued to be strained. In spite of police vigilance, stray cases of assault occurred in different places in the city and a riot occurred on the 18th of March over a petty quarrel between Caste Hindus and Mahars in the orange market. As a consequence an effort was made by Caste Hindus to set a Mahar area on fire. As a result of the disturbances, a few Mahars were injured and one died. It was decided by the local authorities to pass an order under Section 144 of the CrPC [Criminal Procedure Code] prohibiting the carrying of weapons within the limits of the municipality and civil station. At the instance of the District Magistrate, the leaders of various communities issued a joint appeal to the hostile groups asking them to desist from violence. At a meeting on the 21st, the leaders concerned addressed a large audience and warned them to carry on their election propaganda by peaceful methods. Among the leaders concerned, only Mr Ruikar has continued to adopt an irresponsible attitude. The ill feeling between the Caste Hindus and the Mahars has spread to the Wardha and Bhandara districts where in some instances the authorities had to intervene to prevent trouble.

2. Caste Tensions in CP and Berar

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for the Central Provinces and Berar for the second half of April 1946. File No. 18/4/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Communal

The strained relations existing between Caste Hindus and members of the Scheduled Castes spread to Pulgaon where a caste Hindu was stabbed by a Mahar youth, and the authorities were compelled to intervene. Several Mahars from Nagpur are also stated to have migrated into the Bhandara district as a consequence of the recent riots.

Labour

Attendance of Scheduled Castes labourers in the Empress Mills continued to be very low through fear of assault by Caste Hindus either on their way to the mills or inside them. Subsequently, however, there has been some improvement in relations, and the attendance of both men and women in the Empress Mills has returned to nearly normal. In the Model Mills,

there was some trouble on account of an attempt to keep out Scheduled Castes labour, and one or two isolated assaults took place, as a consequence of which the Mills have now been closed. The general situation has, however, substantially improved and no more stabbing cases occurred during the fortnight.

3. Two Die in Caste Clash in Nagpur

News report, 'Two killed in Nagpur'. *Free Press Journal*, 14 May 1946.

Nagpur, May 13. Two persons were killed and five seriously injured and admitted into hospital in a fresh clash this evening between Hindus and Mahars on the outskirts of the city. Three others sustained minor injuries.

It is stated that five Mahars armed with spears clashed with some Hindus who were returning with herds of cattle near the railway level crossing of Nagpur-Chindwara road. Fifty Mahars later joined the party and a free fight ensued. One Hindu died on the spot while one Mahar succumbed to wounds caused by lathi attack.

Of the five persons admitted into hospital the condition of one is reported to be critical.

The District Magistrate visited the scene of incident.—API.

4. Caste Relations Remain Strained in Nagpur

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for the Central Provinces and Berar for the first half of May 1946. File No. 18/5/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Communal

Feelings between Caste Hindus and Mahar labourers in Nagpur continue to be strained. A riot occurred on the evening of the 4th of May when a Koshti cartman was beaten by Mahars. As a consequence of this incident, Caste Hindus and Mahars indulged in stone throwing at one another and on the following morning a large crowd of Caste Hindus numbering about a thousand set fire to 13 houses belonging to Mahars. The Mahars retaliated the same evening attacking Caste Hindus living in their locality and stabbing four. During the course of this quarrel, one Mahar was also stabbed. The injuries received were not serious, and the persons concerned have since recovered. On the 9th of May, the Hon'ble Prime Minister inspected the disturbed areas and addressed two meetings, advising his audience not to resort to hooliganism and emphasising that if his advice was not taken it may prove necessary to resort to drastic measures. Strong police pickets have been posted throughout the disturbed areas which are patrolled by police lorries. Orders prohibiting meetings and assemblies of 5 or more persons and processions, and orders prohibiting the carrying of any dangerous weapon remain in force; but the area over which the order prohibiting assemblies is now enforced has now been curtailed so as to include only that part of the town in which disturbances have taken place. Over this area, a special curfew order restricting movements at night has also been enforced. Over 50 arrests have been made in connection with the incidents of the 4th and 5th and investigations are in progress. A further serious riot took place about a mile outside Nagpur on the 13th May. As a consequence, one Mahar was killed and one Kunbi.

The tension existing between Mahars and Caste Hindus at Pulgaon, has now lessened and the situation is reported as being under control. In Bhandara feelings are stated to be still bitter

as a result of the happenings in Nagpur, and ill-feeling appears to have spread into the Balaghat district.

Labour

Attendance at the Model Mills improved and had nearly returned to normal by the 13th when the Mills were closed on account of a wage dispute unconnected with the tension between the Scheduled Castes and caste Hindu Labourers. Mahar women labourers are attending the mills regularly, but not yet all the men. In the Empress Mills, the Mahar workers do not attend the night shift apparently because they are afraid of being assaulted.

5. Peace Committees Set Up to Reduce Communal Tension

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for the Central Provinces and Berar for the second half of May 1946. File No. 18/5/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Communal

Ill-feeling between Caste Hindus and Mahars continued in Nagpur, but except for a stabbing incident on the 23rd of May when a Kunbi youth was stabbed by a Mahar boy and subsequently died, no further serious incident has occurred. A fresh order under Section 144 prohibiting the carrying of weapons was, however, passed by the District Magistrate.

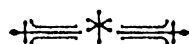
The Hon'ble Prime Minister visited Nagpur on the 23rd May and established Peace Committees. These committees visited various Hindu localities and their members urged the people to remain peaceful. The activities of these committees are considered by the Commissioner, Nagpur Division, as having acted as a brake on the activities of *akhadas* which have been getting restive.

6. Strikes at Empress Mills, Nagpur, Following Caste Clashes

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for the Central Provinces and Berar for the first half of May 1946. File No. 18/5/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Labour

The ill-feeling that exists between Caste Hindus and Mahars in Nagpur has continued to affect attendance at the Mills. Two stay-in strikes occurred in the Empress Mills following a petty quarrel between a Mahar labourer and caste Hindu labourer inside the mills. Caste Hindu workers at these mills expressed resentment at the elaborate police arrangements made inside the mills. Attendance in the day shift has averaged 88%, but night shifts have been poor with an attendance of only about 25%. A large number of Mahar labourers continued to absent themselves from the mills as they consider it unsafe to work during the night shifts in spite of the special police arrangements made to prevent their being molested en route.



7. Dispute Over the Taking of Water from Wells

Extracts from Paragraphs for Monthly Summary for the Cabinet; 18 June 1946. File No. 5/12/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Central Provinces (Second Half of May)

... A dispute occurred between Mahars and Caste Hindus in Balaghat District over taking water from wells in the dispensary and Police station compounds....

8. Friction Between Mahars and Gaolis at Kamptee

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for the Central Provinces and Berar for the second half of June 1946. File No. 18/6/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Communal

There was no further incident in connection with the tension between the Scheduled Castes and Caste Hindus in Nagpur. But friction between the Mahars and Gaolis occurred at Kamptee where some stray assaults were reported, the Mahars being armed with spears. As a consequence, the Deputy Commissioner, Nagpur, passed an order under Section 144, Criminal Procedure Code, prohibiting processions, meetings, etc. Owing to an improvement in the situation, it has however proved possible to withdraw the order. The Deputy Commissioner reports that, thanks to the efficiency of the Police arrangements, the state of affairs both at Nagpur and at Kamptee is now rapidly returning to normal which is apparent from the perceptible improvement in the attendance of textile workers in the mills.

9. Stone Throwing in a Koshti Neighbourhood of Nagpur

Extracts from Paragraphs for Monthly Summary for the Cabinet; 15 June 1946. File No. 5/12/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Central Provinces (First and Second Halves of June)

Strained relations continued to exist in Nagpur between Scheduled Castes and Caste Hindus. Some stone-throwing occurred in one of the *mohallas* of Nagpur inhabited by Koshtis. A minor disturbance took place between Hindus and Muslims at Seoni....

10. Scheduled Castes' Federation Resorts to Direct Action

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for the Central Provinces and Berar for the second half of July 1946. File No. 18/7/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Political

The Mahars of Akola took out a rowdy procession in which sticks and spears were carried. It ended up in a meeting in which one Shambhu Ansu Khandare made a violent speech abusing

Mahatma Gandhi and saying that those Caste Hindus who used violence against the Depressed Classes should be killed. He was subsequently sent for by the Deputy Commissioner and warned....

Students of the Scheduled Castes Federation also went in procession to the residences of the Ministers for Education and Agriculture and asked for reduction in school fees and other concessions. They dispersed saying that if Government continued to ignore their demand, they would find other means of obtaining redress....

An anti-Government and anti-Congress demonstration was staged in order to protest against the exclusion of Ambedkarite Mahars from the Interim Government and the Constituent Assembly by some 10,000 Mahars under the auspices of the Scheduled Castes Federation in front of the Assembly Hall in Nagpur on the 18th July when the Provincial Legislative Assembly was in session.

Black flags were carried and anti-Government and anti-Congress slogans shouted. It was followed up by a meeting at which the speakers described the services rendered to Government by the Mahars during the 1942 disturbances and condemned the Cabinet Mission and the Congress for overlooking the claims of the Scheduled Castes Federation to representation in the Interim Government and the Constituent Assembly, and expressed no confidence in the men returned to the Constituent Assembly, demanded the abrogation of the Poona Pact and separate electorates and exhorted the audience to enroll themselves as volunteers for a non-violent *satyagraha* which it was proposed to launch in Nagpur. Shambhu Ansu Khandare of Akola, referred to above, in an objectionable speech, advocated the burning down of the Assembly Hall and the residences of the Ministers as the only means of getting rid of the Congress Ministry, but apologised on being reprimanded by the President....

11. Poona Pact Protest Day, 16 August 1946

Report by S. Sanyal, Deputy Commissioner, Nagpur, to M.I. Rahim, Commissioner, Nagpur Division; Nagpur, 17 August 1946. File No. 12; Political and Military Department, Government of the Central Provinces & Berar (1946); Madhya Pradesh State Archives.

Poona Pact Protest Day

The Scheduled Castes Federation leaders, namely Mr Dashrath Patil of Bela, President of the Scheduled Castes Federation, Central Provinces and Berar, Mr H.D. Awale, Secretary of the Scheduled Castes Federation and other leaders of the Mahar community were busy from the 12th August organising this show.

The Secretary of the Scheduled Castes Federation had on our request agreed to start their procession at 4.30 p.m. from Indora. They were then to march by the Kamptee Road, the Cement Road, the Mount Road passing by the bungalow of the Hon'ble Mr R. Agnibhoj, then by the Commissioner's office and the Hon'ble the Premier's bungalow and then take the Palm Road in front of the Central Provinces Secretariat on to the Kasturchand Park. The processionists easily numbered 20,000 which included 5000 women and children. They started at 4 p.m. and instead of marching along the route notified by them, they came on straight by the Link Road to the Sadar Road emerging somewhere near the Anjuman Islamia High School. The procession then went by the Mount Road. The processionists were particularly vociferous when they approached the Hon'ble Mr Agnibhoj's bungalow. They, however, kept moving. The procession

then came to the Hon'ble the Premier's bungalow where also they were vociferous, but here too the processionists kept on moving. They then proceeded straight towards the Maharajabagh Club and then turned to the left and took the road to Sitabuldi and then in front of the Sitabuldi Police Station onto the Kasturchand Park. The Government House, the Hon'ble Mr R. Agnibhoj's bungalow and the Premier's bungalow, the Civil Secretariat and the General Post Office were amply protected. There was considerable enthusiasm. We did not notice any Musalmans in the procession. The processionists used the following slogans:

- 'British Government is deceitful'
- 'Congress is deceitful'
- 'British and Congress Governments have joined, boycott them'
- 'Boycott the Hon'ble Mr R. Agnibhoj'
- 'Down with Poona Pact'

The following three incidents occurred:

(1) When the procession had reached the Commissioner's office, a High Court *chaprasi* attempted to cycle across and the processionists objected. As he persisted, he was pushed away and beaten with a stick by a processionist.

(2) On the Maharajabagh Road a cyclist with a white cap attempted to cross the procession. The processionists warned him but he was persistent. His cap was snatched away and he was hit once with stick on his forehead [forehead?].

(3) When the processionists were approaching the Morris College, ministerial car no Y 6 appeared on the road and attempted to cut across the route taken by the processionists. Some of them lost patience and rushed towards it but the City Superintendent and the City Magistrate rushed to the place and put in a police lorry between the processionists and the car. The processionists then went along.

The processionists reached the Kasturchand Park where they were to hold the meeting at about 6.30. Most of them were already tired and they had no patience to listen to speeches. The crowd began dwindling away. The loudspeaker went out of action and most of the processionists left the place leaving about 2000 in Kasturchand Park. Very brief speeches were given by Dashrath Patil, R.R. Kawade, H.D. Awale, S.M. Meshram and Laxman Gambhira. They demanded abolition of the Poona Pact and the formation of separate electorates, they condemned the Congress and the British Cabinet Mission for their failure to include real representatives from the Scheduled Castes Federation both in the short and long term arrangements, they sympathised with the Poona *satyagrahis* and appealed to the Mahars to hold themselves in readiness for launching *satyagraha* to be started on the 3rd September.

Mahars observed complete hartal on that day. They absented themselves from the mills. Students of the Scheduled Castes Federation did not attend schools and colleges. Nagorao Mochi of Nagpur spoke in the meeting held in the Kasturchand Park and said that he would persuade his community to join the Scheduled Castes Federation in their protest against the Congress and the Government.

Before the procession had reached the Police Station at Sitabuldi, three drunken Mahars were found in suspicious circumstances near the Morris College. As they were not in their senses they were brought to the Police Station and one of the Mahars who looked a goonda had concealed under his garments a sword stick about 14' long. This Mahar is to be prosecuted under the Arms Act.

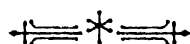
There were very [many] Communists among the Mahar processionists.

12. Scheduled Castes' Federation to Disrupt Legislative Assembly

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for the Central Provinces and Berar for the first half of September 1946. File No. 18/9/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Political

... The Scheduled Castes Federation organised their *satyagraha* ... with the apparent object of protesting against their exclusion from the Interim Government and the injustice alleged to have been done to their community by the Poona Pact. The *modus operandi* was to bring up batches of three to ten persons to the Assembly Chamber shouting anti-British and anti-Congress slogans and there offer themselves for arrest. To prevent disorder outside the Assembly Chamber and to ensure that the Legislature conducted its deliberations in an atmosphere of peace and tranquility, the District Magistrate had passed an order under Section 144, Criminal Procedure Code, banning all processions except those of a religious nature. All approaches to the Chamber were cordoned off and the public were forbidden to pass the cordon without a permit. Elaborate Police precautions were taken. As had been confidently expected the so-called *satyagraha* rapidly deteriorated into a series of violent demonstrations by excited young people, including a few women. When the Police prevented their crossing the cordon, the crowd became unruly and defiant. Those who insist on crossing the cordon are arrested and taken in omnibuses, detained till the rising of the Assembly and then released. Even this was rendered difficult by the behaviour of the demonstrators who refused to get into the vehicles or give their names or address or their thumb impressions. Leaflets are published making false allegations of high-handed behaviour on the part of the Police. Daily arrests ranged between 100 and 400. Practically all the demonstrators so far employed belong to the neighbouring districts brought specially to Nagpur to take part in the *satyagraha*, and the promoters had hoped that by arresting and sending them to jail, Government would accept the responsibility for feeding them. When this did not take place, they were disappointed and a feeling of frustration spread among the rank and file as they thought that they were being cheated of the 'glory' of imprisonment and consequent martyrdom. They therefore resorted to increasingly violent methods which led eventually to the dispersal of the crowd by a mild lathi charge on the 18th, after the District Magistrate and some Police officers were hit by stones, though not seriously. The adjournment motion tabled as a protest against the action of the authorities was defeated, after notable speeches had been made by a Congress Harijan MLA, who exposed the motives and methods of the Scheduled Castes Federation and the Hon'ble Minister for Information who paid a tribute to the tact and forbearance shown by the magistracy and the police and added that if anybody thought that the Government would look on with indifference when officers were being stoned in the discharge of their lawful duty, he was grievously mistaken.



13. Scheduled Castes' Federation Continues *Satyagraha*

Extracts from Police Abstract of Intelligence, Vol. LXI, No. 39; Nagpur, 28 September 1946. File No. 72; Political and Military Department, Government of the Central Provinces & Berar (1946); Madhya Pradesh State Archives.

Depressed Classes

563. After a lapse of 4 days, *satyagraha* was resumed at Nagpur by the Scheduled Castes Federation under the direction of P.M. Rajbhoj and Gaikwad of Bombay. 4358 arrests were made and as the tactics adopted constituted a flagrant violation of orders under Section 144 CrPC, 826 *satyagrahis* including their leaders R.S.G. Thaware and Dashrath Laxman Patil were committed to jail custody. 600 of these were released on tendering written apologies and undertaking to dissociate themselves from the movement. A batch of 5 *satyagrahis*, who embarked on a fast as a protest against Government's policy in not providing them with meals after their release, were persuaded four days later to abandon their fast. Haridas Awade, General Secretary of the Satyagraha Committee, continued to disseminate unauthorised cyclostyled newsheets, criticising the Congress Ministry and appealing for support for the movement.

(b) Two well attended meetings were held at Nagpur on the 26th to welcome P.N. Rajbhoj and Gaikwad, who in reply to congratulatory speeches, said that the object of the *satyagraha* was to protest against the iniquitous Poona Pact and to disturb the deliberations of the Legislative Assembly and that it was intended to carry it on even after the Assembly session to hinder administration by the Congress Government.

(c) Propaganda on behalf of the *satyagraha* was carried on in the Wardha, Nimar, Bhandara, Akola and Yeotmal districts. Small amounts were collected but the response to the call for volunteers was meagre except from Yeotmal from where batches are regularly being despatched to Nagpur. On the 23rd a public reception was accorded to the last two batches which returned to Yeotmal after offering *satyagraha* at Nagpur. Their sacrifices were eulogised and the audience exhorted to emulate their example in fighting for their rights.

(d) A Depressed Classes' League was formed at Wardha on the 25th September at the instance of S.V. Sonavane, MLA, with Sitaram Bangadoo Borkar, Chamar, as President and Balgangadhar Shaukaram as Secretary. Under threats from Scheduled Castes Federation workers the Secretary is reported to have agreed to resign.

14. Government Response to Scheduled Castes' Federation's *Satyagraha*

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for the Central Provinces and Berar for the second half of September 1946. File No. 18/9/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Political

The fortnight has been uneventful politically except for the so-called *satyagraha* carried on by the CP Branch of the Scheduled Castes Federation. The events leading up to the dispersal of a crowd on the 18th of September by means of a mild lathi charge have been summarised in the last report. A total of 5526 men, 1462 women and girls and 789 boys offered themselves for arrest between the 19th and 30th September. Up to the 27th, the old policy of arrest and

release in the evening was continued. On the 26th evening, however, batches of those released assumed a truculent attitude on their way home and stoned an omnibus breaking its glass shutters. This and other similar incidents which had been on the increase led the Provincial Government to revise their attitude towards the *satyagrahis* and it was decided to arrest those whose behaviour was unruly or defiant. In all some 947 including 11 women were thus arrested and remanded to jail custody. No sooner were they locked up than they began to offer written apologies accompanied by assurances of future good behaviour. So great is their addiction to smoking and eating *pan*, rendered possible by the recent phenomenal increase in their earning power, that they found it impossible to stay in jail deprived of these 'necessaries'. The District Magistrate was hard put to it to cope with this general urge for freedom and extra staff had to be employed. The upshot is that up to date, out of the 947 people who were sent to jail, all but 180 have been released. The statement signed by each *satyagrahi* expresses the signatory's regret for the part he has played in the *satyagraha* and promises that he would take no further part in the campaign and would not transgress the law. Among those that are still in prison are Rao Sahib G.M. Thaware and Dashrath Patil, two of the leaders. It is understood, that the remaining leaders who took part in the movement have absconded for fear of being arrested.

15. Scheduled Castes' Federation Leadership Arrested

News report, 'Scheduled Caste *Satyagraha*'. *Free Press Journal*, 1 October 1946.

The Police on Sunday arrested some workers of the Scheduled Castes Federation on the charge of abetment of defiance of the order under Section 144 prohibiting the taking out of processions. This action is a sequel to the *satyagraha* campaign of the Scheduled Castes Federation members in the vicinity of the CP Assembly building for about one month.

Among those arrested are two leaders of the Scheduled Castes Federation, Mr D.L. Patil (President of the CP Scheduled Castes Federation) and Rao Saheb G.M. Thaware.

Of those who were arrested and remanded to jail custody pending trial following the *satyagraha* demonstration, 62 persons including some women have been released on the undertaking that they will not participate in the *satyagraha* movement of the Scheduled Castes Federation.

16. Government's Views on Scheduled Castes' Federation's Politics

Extracts from Paragraphs for Monthly Summary for the Cabinet; 15 December 1946. File No. 5/12/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Central Provinces (First and Second Halves of November)

The anti-caste-Hindu propaganda that is being carried on by the Scheduled Castes Federation is poisoning social life and is slowly permeating the youth of the community. In a meeting convened by the Scheduled Castes Federation in Pulgaon three Mahar boys assaulted a Brahmin boy for no reason and ran away. There has been a fracas between the two sections of the employees of the local mills in which about 7 or 8 people have been injured. Similarly on the Dasehra Day the photos of S.C. Bose and Pt J.L. Nehru which were being taken in a procession were torn to bits by some Mahar boys.

5.B.iii Bombay Province

1. Bombay Police *Lathi* Charge Funeral Procession

News report, 'Unruly funeral procession'. *Statesman*, 5 January 1946.

Bombay, January 4. Fifty-nine people, including two police officers and three constables, were injured when the police made a lathi charge on a large funeral procession taken out here by the supporters of the Scheduled Castes Federation this evening carrying the body of a Scheduled Caste voter who had died following an assault on him yesterday, when he was returning home after recording his vote in the primary elections of Scheduled Castes to the Bombay Legislative Assembly.

The funeral procession was taken out from Dharvi at about 5.30 p.m. Scheduled Castes Federation volunteers, armed with lathis and about 100 police constables and officers accompanied the procession.

More people joined the procession as it proceeded. Shouting anti-Congress slogans. Some people in the crowd burnt Gandhi caps and forced people on the way to join the procession.

Traffic Suspended

Stones were thrown at trams and buses and people were dragged out to join the procession. Some shops on the wayside were forcibly closed and traffic had to be suspended for nearly three hours. As the crowd became unruly and indulged in stone-throwing, the police put a cordon round the processionists and asked them to disperse.

A large police force was requisitioned as the crowd went out of control and started throwing stones at the police. Some people on the road were also assaulted.

The police then made a lathi charge on the procession and dispersed it. The body which was carried in the procession was left on the road as the crowd melted after the lathi charge. It was later taken to the cremation ground by about 200 people who were escorted by an armed police force.—API.

2. Primary Elections for Bombay Scheduled Caste Seats

Extracts from an article, 'Clashes between supporters of rival candidates'. *People's Age*, 13 January 1946.

On Friday January 4, in Bombay's working-class area of Parel-Lalbaug, the police dispersed, after a brutal lathi charge, a funeral procession of untouchable workers, 40,000 strong. They injured over 300 men. One of them died later on in hospital. The police are patrolling the untouchable workers' areas, creating a feeling of panic among the residents.

This giant procession was accompanying the dead body of an untouchable worker, Chokhaji Sawlaram Gangurde, an employee of the Tramway Co.

On January 3, the primary elections for the Scheduled Castes' seats were held in Bombay. Both the Congress and the Scheduled Castes' Federation (SCF) candidates were standing. Chokhaji was an active worker of the SCF. He cast his vote and was on his way back home, when he was suddenly attacked near the Labour Camp at Matunga. About twenty-five goondas, armed with *lathis*, knives and other weapons hacked him to pieces.

Shocking Climax

This murder had come as a shocking climax to the open rowdyism that had marked the whole of the polling day against sympathisers and workers of the SCF by men calling themselves Congress supporters....

Mill Workers Come Out

The press gave scanty news about this tragedy. And yet so intense were the feelings of the untouchable workers when the news reached them, that about 20 mills had to close down their spinning departments because the workers came out on a spontaneous strike. Five mills were completely closed down. Workers from the GIP workshops at Parel and Matunga, from the Tramway workshop at Dadar, etc., came out on strike, as a mark of homage.

At Matunga Labour Camp, from where the procession started, about 30,000 untouchable workers gathered. Most of them coming in big processions of thousands. They came from such extreme ends of the city as Colaba and Kurla, Mazagaon and Bandra, Worli and Dhobi Talao, etc.

The procession soon swelled up to nearly 40,000.

Provocation

The procession marched with placards bearing, "Martyr Chokhaji Zindabad", "Victory to the eight crore Untouchables", "Inquilab Zindabad", "Dr Ambedkar Zindabad", etc. The events of the day had filled them with bitter anti-Congress hatred. Provocative elements were not wanting who were fanning this. All this showed itself in placards like, "Down With Congress Goondaism", etc. Often they shouted, "Congress Murdabad", etc., and even burnt Gandhi caps and the Tricolour.

The procession was about a mile long. But even though anti-Congress feeling was running deep among them, all went smooth and there were no major clashes till the vanguard reached King's Circle, an overwhelmingly Congress-minded area. From here started that series of provocative incidents which has today so badly strained the relations between the two sections of our citizens.

The slogans of the processionists were here replied to with slogans of "Ambedkar Murdabad". The former retaliated with "Down with Congress Goondaism". This was followed by the other side throwing stones at the procession from a neighbouring house. The men in the vanguard rushed at the house, snatched away a tricolour and burnt it on the street. All passersby after this were forcibly deprived of their Gandhi caps which were burnt.

But while this was the situation, in the front, the rear of the procession was still completely peaceful and orderly.

S.B. Jadhav, General Secretary of the Bombay SCF, now appealed to the men to observe peace and not get provoked. This did have some effect. But it was soon negated by stones coming in from a neighbouring area, Poona Wadi. The processionists now were fast losing control over themselves.

At Parel, the police had mobilised a big force of about 300 constables armed with lathis. Near the Communist Party office the body of the untouchable worker was garlanded on behalf of the Bombay Committee of the Communist Party, the Girni Kamgar Union and other Unions of the Red Flag. United slogans of "Down with Capitalism", "Down with Imperialism", "Long Live Working-Class Unity", "Veer Chokhaji Zindabad", "Inquilab Zindabad", "Lal Bawte ki Jay", etc., rent the skies. Workers of all sections fraternised with each other.

Brutal Lathi-Charge

Hardly half a furlong ahead the procession was suddenly attacked with soda-water bottles coming from the Jethabhai Building area. Furiously the men rushed here and there to retaliate. The vanguard had moved much ahead not knowing what was happening behind. There was a gap in the ranks and the 300 policemen charged. They rained down lathi blows for full 20 minutes.

It was a wild and brutal charge. The men were being beaten up as if they were just cattle. The procession was scattered under this attack. Intoxicated, the policemen brandished their lathis and neared the bier. But for the intervention of some Communist workers who were present there, far uglier incidents would have occurred....

Next morning the Bombay nationalist press reacted to this tragic event in the most shameful manner. There was no condemnation of the goondas who had murdered Chokhaji, no condemnation of these who provoked a peaceful procession by throwing stones; worst of all, there was no condemnation even of the brutal lathi charge by the police.

Shameful Press Attitude

But there was condemnation enough of the unseemly anti-Congress acts done by the processionists. *Lokmanya*, leading Congress Marathi daily, was sorry that the police was not prompt enough. It actually gloated over the lathi charge in its headlines. *Bombay Sentinel* blamed the SCF itself, for the murder of Chokhaji. It is yet to make its comment on the police lathi-charge.

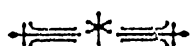
Nootan Gujarat, premier Gujrati Congress daily headlined its whole report 'Ambedkarites Run Amok in North Bombay'. It combined its bile against the SCF with its anti-Communism and cooked up a story which actually defended the police action!...

3. Ambedkarites Clash with Congress Harijans in Ahmedabad

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Bombay Province for the first half of March 1946. File No. 18/3/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Political

On February 24th some Ambedkarites took out a procession in Ahmedabad and attempted to hold a meeting. This was objected to by other Harijans holding Congress views. A fracas ensued in which lathis and knives were used resulting in injuries to 32 persons. Two injured persons succumbed and the local Scheduled Caste Federation in collaboration with the Radical Democratic Party and the Communists organised a funeral procession as a mark of respect to the deceased. Speeches delivered on the occasion exhorted the Harijans to sever their connection with the Ahmedabad Textile Labour Association. Between 20 to 30 mills were closed as a mark of respect to the deceased.



4. Aftermath of Assembly Elections in Bombay

Extracts from an article, 'Congress Leaders Plan: Police And Goondas Carry Out Terror', by P.B. Rangnekar. *People's Age*, 14 April 1946.

Poona Pact Made Meaningless

In the recent Assembly elections, the SCF candidates, Deorukhkar and Bhandare lost of the Congress nominees, though they had secured more than five times the votes secured by the latter in the primary elections.

Thus the Poona Pact of 1932, when Gandhiji's 'fast unto death' forced Dr Ambedkar, the leader of the Untouchables, to agree to joint electorates with reserved seats for the Untouchables, lost all its real meaning. The Congress could, on the strength of the support of the Caste Hindus, smother the real voice of the Untouchables.

Infuriated by the Caste Hindus, under the Congress influence, voting *en bloc* against the Harijan candidates whom the vast majority of them wanted returned, the SCF leaders staged a Black Flag demonstration when Gandhiji came to Bombay on March 31st. (They had done it the previous day also when Gandhiji was expected in the city).

On that day, the Police had taken the most elaborate precautions and not allowed any SCF workers anywhere near Gandhiji's hut. The latter had therefore to rest content with waving their flags at road corners, some distance away.

And yet the press felt no shame in printing the lie that they threw stones and tried to burn Gandhiji's hut! It is interesting to note that in the same breath they wrote that 500 Policemen, 500 volunteers of the Congress Seva Dal, and a host of INA men guarded the hut.

Congress Goondas Take Advantage to Attack

The demonstrators, however, gave some local Congress leaders their life's opportunity. With their age-old links with the city's underworld—links so often denied and equally often proved when workers' strikes were broken or Communists attacked—they would quickly group their forces. Within barely 12 hours of the demonstrations, at 8 p.m. on Sunday, they attacked a *chawl* in the area.

But some men had rushed ahead of the main force. They were beaten off by the united resistance of all workers, Touchables, Untouchables and Muslims.

Two hours later, the goonda mobilisation was complete. Five hundred of them now violently attacked the Untouchable workers' *chawls* with brickbats, soda-water bottles, and stones. It was late in the night, and only a few workers were out on the streets. In about half an hour, about 25 Untouchable workers suffered injuries. The Police *chawls* were within an earshot distance. But they just 'could not hear' anything!

So proud were the goondas of their initial success that some of them are reported to have proudly declared that they were Borkar Dada's men. Borkar is a member of the Bombay Provincial Congress Committee (BPCC) and has been notorious for the last many years for his goonda tactics against workers' strikes. Others came from some Congress sympathisers. They were men who are normally seen in attacks on workers during strikes, etc.

Police Force's Cooperation

Then the police came on the scene, and straightaway rushed into *chawls* occupied by SCF workers. Policemen in 'mufti' helping, the goondas enacted bloodcurdling horror on these innocent men and women at the dead of night between 11 p.m. and 12.30 a.m.

The Same Pattern of Joint Terror

... On Monday, the terror at Worli continued. Goondas at street corners systematically attacked Untouchable workers. Out of fear, the men were forced to stay indoors. Eight mills were thereby affected. But the press put out the smoke screen that the men were on strike....

Even After Congress Ministry in Office

On Wednesday night, April 3, the day the Congress Ministry came into office, about 70 goondas attacked the SCF workers sleeping in the open grounds at the B.D.D. Chawls, Naigaum. At first, stones were hurled at them from a place near the police *chawls* (police guard was less than 100 yards away)....

Conspiracy to Break Working-class Unity

The timing was perfect. Immediately after Dange's [S.A. Dange, General Secretary, All India Trade Union Congress] victory, the result of a united fight by all workers, they got an excellent excuse. Attack on Gandhiji's hut! Provocateurs could not hope for a better excuse for the press. They gave it out as a fight between Touchable and Untouchable workers.

It is to be noticed that simultaneously with the attack, fantastic stories were cooked up at Worli about the evil designs of the SCF men on caste Hindu women; about how they had imported goondas from outside to beat up Touchable workers, etc.; stories planned partly to stir up tempers, partly to prepare the ground for the goonda attacks. Their own methods they attributed to the SCF workers!

Their plans have so far miscarried. They have had to do the dirty job only with the help of professionals. The masses of workers would not oblige them. For their ranks are not so easy to disrupt. Workers from the Standard Mills told us that it was the Police who were beating the Untouchable workers and that something must be done to put an end to it. For they know the Police too well!

The Girni Kamgar Union and the Communist Party are vigorously campaigning among the workers against these Police and goonda outrages both through handbills and mass meetings. But the danger has not yet lessened appreciably, because the Police are openly helping the goondas, and simultaneously terrorising Untouchable workers. A uniform pattern is being worked out everywhere.

The workers will certainly undo the damage. But they will not remain satisfied till an enquiry is made into these excesses. Every honest, conscious citizen, who would fight Police and goondas rule over his locality, must vigorously back up this demand.

5. Scheduled Castes' Federation's Bitterness at Election Defeat

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Bombay Province for the first half of April 1946, File No. 18/4/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Political

At a meeting held in Poona on 30th March under the Presidentship of Mr R.R. Bhole, Mr P.N. Rajbhoj said that the ill-treatment meted out to the Scheduled Castes was quite unjustifiable and added that the Scheduled Castes Federation would fight to the last for separate

electorates and would even commit murder to get them. A resolution was adopted protesting against the Poona Pact and demanding separate electorates.

Mr Gandhi's decision to reside in the midst of Harijans at Worli, while in Bombay, was objected to by supporters of the Scheduled Caste Federation who staged demonstrations near Mr Gandhi's hut and threw stones. A number of clashes between members of the Scheduled Castes and Caste Hindus have since taken place. There is no doubt that the Federation is feeling very bitter at the defeat of its candidates in the elections.

6. Violent Caste Hindu-Ambedkarite Clash in Worli

Extracts from a news report, 'Harijan-Hindu clash near Worli chawls'. *Free Press Journal*, 30 May 1946.

Bombay, Wednesday. For the first time, and that within two months, since the Congress came to power in Bombay, the city police had to open fire on an unruly crowd of violent communalists at Worli this evening.

It is not known whether anyone was injured as a result of this firing, but the stone-throwing that preceded police intervention claimed several victims, eight of whom have been admitted in hospital with severe injuries.

Trouble started when by seven in the evening groups of Harijans, believed to be Ambedkarites, and Caste Hindus began assembling in the Worli area indulging in stone-throwing. By eight the rival parties became more violent and the stone-throwing more intense. Nearby *chawls* came in handy for mob attack. Innocent passersby too were indiscriminately attacked by both groups. The road by this time was carpeted with a layer of stones.

At this stage the City Police arrived on the scene and attempted to disperse the crowd, but the mob would not give in and the police had to open fire. It is not known whether anyone sustained bullet wounds, but several were injured in the stone-throwing. Eight persons, including a police constable, are now lying in hospital with serious injuries.

Concealed tension still haunts the Worli area where the roads look deserted but for police patrols which are keeping vigil in the locality....

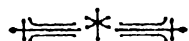
7. Curfew Imposed in Riot Affected Areas of Bombay

Extracts from a news report, 'Police open fire twice'. *Bombay Chronicle*, 31 May 1946.

Bombay, Thursday. There were renewed clashes between Harijans and Caste Hindus today at the B.D.D. Chawls, Worli, and twice during the day, the police had to open fire to disperse unruly crowds.

One person was killed and seven were injured by the firing while 20 persons were injured by stone-throwing. Three cases of stabbing have been reported.

The total number of injured since last night is reported to be 39 of which ten are bullet wound cases....



8. Casualties During Clashes in Worli *Chawls*

Extracts from Paragraphs for Monthly Summary for the Cabinet; 14 June 1946. File No. 5/12/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Bombay (Second Half of May)

Since Mr Gandhi's stay in the Harijans quarters at Worli in Bombay city in April last there has been tension between Caste Hindus and Scheduled Castes. Serious disturbances broke out on the 29th May between the two communities occupying the Worli *chawls*. They indulged in violent stone throwing and there were sporadic cases of assault and stabbing. The police had to open fire to disperse crowds. The casualties were:

- (1) 3 killed and 62 injured by mobs.
- (2) 3 killed and 6 injured in police firing.

A curfew order and a proclamation of emergency under the Police Act to enable the externment of mischief mongers from the area restored peace at Worli, but the trouble later spread to Mazagaon where a police sub-Inspector had to open fire on a crowd. 6 were injured by stones and none by police firing.

9. Demonstrations Prohibited in Front of Legislative Assembly

Extracts from a news report, 'Scheduled Caste *satyagrahis* to defy ban'. *Free Press Journal*, 15 July 1946.

Poona, July 14. Poona Police officials will be faced with a piquant situation on Monday when the Legislative Assembly meets, following the decision of the Scheduled Castes Satyagraha Committee to defy the ban on processions and demonstrations half a mile round the Council Hall.

President of the Satyagraha Committee Mr Gaikwad today described the suggestion of the District Magistrate to have the demonstration for half an hour or alternatively to have it beyond the prohibited area, as a deliberate insult to the organisation, and Bombay Home Minister Mr Morarji Desai made it clear that the ban is there and that it will be enforced.

Meanwhile hundreds of *satyagrahis* have arrived in the city from Nasik, Bombay and other parts of the province. Elaborate police precautions are being taken to prevent the demonstrators from disturbing the proceedings of the Assembly.

Six persons were injured including Mr B.K. Gaikwad, ex-MLA and President of the Bombay Scheduled Castes Federation and the Satyagraha Committee of the Federation when stones were thrown at a *jatha* of nearly 100 volunteers from Nasik and Bombay which arrived from Bombay at the 'Satyagraha' Camp in Bhawani Peth this noon.

Mr P.N. Rajabhoj, General Secretary of the All-India Scheduled Castes Federation, says: "The *jatha* of nearly 100 *satyagrahis* from Nasik and Bombay arrived at the camp and were busy arranging themselves when unexpectedly stone throwing at the volunteers started. Mr B.K. Gaikwad, President of the Bombay Provincial Scheduled Castes Federation, who arrived with the *jatha* went forward to see what was happening and he himself was hit on his thigh. Six volunteers in all received injuries including Mr Gaikwad, Mr A.G. Powar and Mr Mohite who were taken to the hospital for treatment and who were later allowed to go."

The Satyagraha Committee of the Bombay Provincial Scheduled Castes Federation, decided to "reject the offer made by the District Magistrate allowing conditional *satyagraha*."

Insulting Offer

Mr B.K. Gaikwad, told the Associated Press of India that the District Magistrate's offer was "mischievous and insulting". "The only condition that we will voluntarily abide by, as already declared, is that the *satyagraha* shall be completely nonviolent and peaceful on our part. It does not become creditable to a Ministry which calls itself 'popular' to have in force such an order depriving the right of citizens to gather and express their feelings publicly.

"The order itself is a proof that the Ministry is there not because of the voluntary support of all elements in public life, but with the support of the same prohibitory and restrictive orders against which the Congress itself, when out of office, protested hoarse and wild. This shows that the Congress is afraid of public demonstrations even if those may be peaceful and non-violent." ...

10. Caste Clashes Continue in Bombay and Nashik

Extracts from Paragraphs for Monthly Summary for the Cabinet; 15 July 1946. File No. 5/12/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Bombay (First and Second Half of June and First Half of July)

There was a clash on June 8th in Bombay city between Scheduled Castes and Caste Hindus. The Police were also attacked. To bring the situation under control the police had to fire eight rounds. Five policemen and five Caste Hindus were injured. A curfew order was forced from 9th June after which the situation became quiet.

A scuffle between Congress Harijans and Scheduled Castes Federation workers occurred at Nasik on May 28th, three persons receiving slight injuries.

11. Defiance of Ban on Demonstrations Around Council Hall, Pune

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Bombay Province for the first half of July 1946. File No. 18/7/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Political

The General Secretary of the Scheduled Castes Federation in a statement issued to the press has announced the decision of the Federation to launch a passive resistance movement in accordance with the resolution passed by its Working Committee on June 24th. A beginning has been made at Poona, where on July 15th when the Bombay Legislative Assembly was in session attempts were made to defy the order of the District Magistrate prohibiting meetings, demonstrations, etc., within a radius of half a mile from the Council Hall. A number of demonstrators, including some women, marched through the streets of the cantonment shouting slogans and waving black flags. On being stopped by the police about half a mile away from the Council Hall, they squatted on the road for about an hour and a half and then dispersed. A few of them, who infiltrated through the police cordon and reached the Council Hall, were

arrested. The defiance is to continue during the Assembly session and for this purpose volunteers have been drafted to Poona from Bombay City and the neighbouring districts in Maharashtra.

After a spell of nearly a month there was recrudescence of trouble between the Caste Hindu and Harijans at Tarwadi in Mazagaon (Bombay) on July 2nd. Both the parties indulged in stone throwing, as a result of which about 30 persons were injured. A curfew order has been promulgated in the affected area.

12. Scheduled Castes' Federation *Satyagrahis* Court Arrest at Pune

News report, '20 arrested in Poona'. *Free Press Journal*, 16 July 1946.

Poona, July 15. Twenty members belonging to the Scheduled Castes Federation, including twelve women were arrested today for defying the ban of the Poona District Magistrate and demonstrating in front of the Council Hall where the Bombay Assembly is holding the autumn session.

It may be recalled that the Federation had decided to offer *satyagraha* and defy the police ban on demonstrations and processions within half a mile of the Secretariat. Among the women arrested today are Mrs Ahantabai Dani, a member of the Working Committee and Mrs Gitabai Gaikwad, wife of the President of the *Satyagraha* Committee.

A huge procession which attempted to march to the Council Hall was prevented from [entering] the prohibited area by the police cordon. At a meeting held in the evening it was announced that the procession of *satyagrahis* would be taken out tomorrow as well and everyday thereafter. Mr Rajbhoj addressing the gathering said that a beginning had been made in the battle for the freedom of the Scheduled Castes. He also congratulated those who courted arrest today.

The Associated Press of India adds: Ten of the 20 arrested persons were later released by the police in the evening after a warning had been administered to them. The remaining ten, including three women, who will be prosecuted tomorrow in the court of the Additional City Magistrate for violating the District Magistrate's orders and staging a demonstration in front of the Council Hall, refused to offer bail and decided to remain in police custody.

The first batch of six *satyagrahis*—four women and two men—[were] arrested this morning opposite the Council Hall for violating the Poona District Magistrate's order and staging a demonstration in front of the Council Hall.

Just before the Assembly session began these six *satyagrahis* entered the Council Hall compound and immediately on entering took out black flags from their pockets and shouted slogans of "Down with British Imperialism" "Down with Congress" and "Scrap the Poona Pact".

Two further batches of eight women and six men were later arrested at about 1 p.m. at the entrance of the Council Hall.

Procession Starts

Almost at the same time as the first batch of the *satyagrahis* were staging their demonstration, a big procession of Scheduled Castes which started with the intention of going to the Council Hall and breaking the District Magistrate's order was being stopped near the War Memorial on the Station Road at a chalk line marked to indicate the half-mile distance from the Council Hall. According to the District Magistrate's order no procession is allowed in the area half a mile from the Council Hall.

Road Cordoned Off

Lathi-armed police numbering over hundred and police officers including Mr E.A. Dodwell, ASP, Mr J. Crone, Dy SP, Mr F.D. Roach, Dy SP, were waiting here and immediately the procession approached, they cordoned off the road and stopped the procession there.

The processionists squatted on the ground shouting slogans of the Scheduled Caste Federation and other slogans. After remaining thus for about two hours they decided to return to the camp. The procession was allowed to give a turn to the War Memorial and then marched along the Wellesley Road back to the 'satyagrahis' Camp.

13. Bombay Government's Explanation for the Ban

News report, 'Scheduled Castes' *satyagraha* takes ugly colour'. *Free Press Journal*, 20 July 1946.

Poona, July 19. The Satyagraha, launched by the Scheduled Castes Federation, was intensified today in spite of inclement weather. The first batch of volunteers offered satyagraha at 1.15 p.m. and by 1.45 about 75 satyagrahis, including eight women, were arrested by the police. One volunteer today succeeded in breaking through the police cordon round the Secretariat buildings, and rushed to the office of the Home Minister, Mr Morarji Desai, shouting "Morarji Saheb Murdabad". He was immediately overpowered by four constables armed with lathis.

It appears that the volunteers today did not restrict themselves to old anti-Congress slogans, but indulged in slogans bearing personal criticisms against some of the Ministers. The volunteers appeared to have coined a new slogan, viz., "Bhimdev-ki-jai".

All the 122 volunteers arrested on Thursday were sentenced this morning to undergo imprisonment varying from 15 days to two months. Twelve persons, arrested on Wednesday who pleaded 'not guilty' were also convicted today.

Dr B.R. Ambedkar is likely to come to Poona on Sunday to consult leaders of the satyagraha campaign.

The Government of Bombay have issued the following press note: The only purpose in issuing the order banning demonstrations, processions, etc., within a radius of half a mile from the Council Hall is to ensure that the work of the Legislature, which has an important agenda before it, is carried on in an atmosphere of tranquility which is of the utmost importance while considering measures of legislation.

Other Channels Open

The Government has repeatedly appealed to the people to ventilate their grievances through MLA's and MLC's and local officials and to approach the Ministers properly only when all these avenues fail. The Government has also made it clear that no useful purpose would be served by marching to the Assembly Hall which if anything has only a demonstrative value. The Ministers are always accessible to representative deputations who can place their grievances and demands before the Ministers.

In view of all this it will be agreed that the Government was right in issuing the order in question to ensure that the Legislature carries on its deliberations in an atmosphere of peace.

The Satyagraha movement launched upon by volunteers of the Scheduled Castes Federation is supposed to be in the nature of a protest against the Cabinet Mission's proposals. It is obvious that the Government of Bombay or the Bombay Legislature has nothing to do with

the Cabinet Mission's proposals and it is difficult to comprehend what the Legislature or the Bombay Government can do in the matter of redressing whatever grievances the Federation may be having in regard to those proposals or the Poona Pact. Despite this the Government offered to relax the ban partially but this was not acceptable to the organisers of the Satyagraha movement. The government was, therefore, left with no alternative but to enforce the ban. The Government hopes that wiser counsels will prevail and appeals to the organisers to abandon the Satyagraha movement.

14. Bill to Eradicate Untouchability in Bombay Province.

News report, 'A charter of freedom for Harijans'. *Free Press Journal*, 11 September 1946.

Poona, September 10. A comprehensive piece of legislation which aims at eradicating untouchability from the province of Bombay, will be introduced in the current session of the Bombay Legislative Assembly by Mr G.D. Tapase, Minister for Industries, Fisheries and Backward Class Department. This bill, which may be regarded as the first major statutory attack against untouchability in India has received blessings from Mahatma Gandhi.

The Bill provides for the removal of prevailing social disabilities of the Harijans. A bill on similar lines was first introduced by the Congress Ministry in 1939. A Select Committee was also appointed to report on it. The Committee had also submitted its report but before it was enacted the Ministry resigned and together with it the bill also receded into the background.

The present bill, although principally and mainly based on the report of the Select Committee with certain additional provisions, alterations and modifications, is definitely much advanced on the 1939 bill as it emerged from the Select Committee.

While in the last bill, certain important provisions like right of access to the Harijans in places of public entertainment and amusement and shops were absent, the present bill not only incorporates these essential provisions but it makes all offences under these and other provisions of the bill cognizable. The 1939 bill provided only cash penalties while the new bill makes offences under it punishable with imprisonment up to three months. Persons who are found repeating the offences will receive enhanced sentences.

Although the present bill can be considered as the most progressive one that can be introduced by a Provincial Government it is certainly lacking in one most important provision, namely, Harijans' right to enter temples and offer prayers.

Scope Of Bill

The Bill lays down that places of all public entertainments, e.g., hotels, boarding and lodging houses, coffee houses and refreshment rooms, booths, buildings, cinemas, etc., shall remain open for Harijans.

Harijans will not be excluded from any shops of public necessities.

The bill further provides admission for Harijans in all places of public amusement namely public gardens, parks, etc.

It also provides that no Harijans will be denied access to any charitable institution. e.g., *dharmashalas*, etc., or any other place used for public purposes and maintained mainly or partially by funds contributed by Government or local bodies. As expenses of most of the 'public places' are met by funds contributed by local bodies it is expected that this provision

will enable Harijans to use Hindu cremation grounds where at present they are denied entry and the right of cremation.

It also lays down that no Harijan shall be denied access to or use of a river, stream, well, tank, water tap or any other public drinking place. It also provides that no Harijans shall be denied access to sanitary conveniences or any road or pathway to which other Caste Hindus have the right of access and use.

Harijans will have the right to use all public conveyance, e.g., bus, tram, train, ferry, tonga licenced by Government to ply for hire.

The bill further stipulates that benefits of all Hindu Charities, Trusts and Endowments, except those that are specifically made for a particular section or class of Hindu society, must also go to the Harijans.

Any place kept apart for the use of "Hindus generally" except those that are reserved for particular community or section, must also be open to Harijans.

The bill also provides that "no Harijan shall merely on ground of being a Harijan be ineligible for office under any authority constituted under law."

The bill precludes Law courts from taking cognizance of customs and usages imposing any disability on Harijans.

It is in the fitness of things that this bill which seeks to root out the evil of untouchability from the province of Bombay should be moved by a Minister who himself is a Harijan and who has personally undergone all miseries, hardships and tortures that are inflicted on the Harijans by the Caste Hindus, simply because they are Harijans.

5.B.iv Madras

1. Police Open Fire at Dravidian Federation's Conference at Madurai

News report, 'Police open fire on Madura crowd: One killed'. *Free Press Journal*, 13 May 1946.

Madura, May 12. One person was killed and another seriously injured when police opened fire on an unruly crowd this afternoon at the Vaigai riverbed where the conference of Blackshirts (volunteers of the Dravidian Federation) was being held.

The Blackshirts conference pandal and other sheds erected nearby were set on fire and were completely gutted. There was nobody inside the pandal. It is reported that fire engines which were proceeding to the scene were obstructed and stoned.

Following today's disturbances curfew has been imposed by the District Magistrate from 7 p.m. to 5.30 a.m.

Order under Section 144 CrPC prohibiting the assembly of more than five persons has also been promulgated.

A report was circulating this morning that some of the Blackshirts had insulted women who went to the Sri Meenakshi temple for worship and that an idol of god Ganesh was desecrated in another temple. This resulted in Blackshirts, wherever they were found, being set upon by angry mobs armed with lathis. A number of Blackshirts are reported to have been assaulted and beaten.

Later at about 10.30 a.m. an angry crowd numbering over 500 gathered in front of the Blackshirts conference pandal in Vaigai riverbed and began throwing stones.

Police Arrive

Armed police immediately arrived on the scene and advised the Backshirts who had gathered in the pandal to disperse. When the Blackshirts were dispersing they were set upon and beaten with lathis. Two Blackshirts were stabbed in the back. Another sustained bleeding injuries.

The crowd then began throwing stones at the police party. The District Superintendent of Police Mr Spittler who was on the scene with [a] police party was hit by a stone and received a bleeding injury on the forehead. Some of the constables were hit. From 11.30 a.m. the police tried to disperse the crowd by use of tear gas but this had no effect. The crowd continued to pelt stones at the police.

The crowd was insisting that the Dravidian Federation flag which was hoisted on the top of a palmyrah tree behind the conference pandal should be pulled down. Stone throwing continued to increase. All attempts to persuade the crowd to disperse failed.

Fire Opened

The police then at 3.12 p.m. fired four shots which resulted in one person being killed and another seriously injured. The injured person was removed to hospital.

Despite the police firing, the angry crowd before the conference pandal did not disperse and continued to throw stones.

Following the repeated demand of the crowd that the Dravidian Federation black flag which was flying over a nearby palmyrah tree should be removed, the police arranged for the removal of the flag but refused to hand it over to a certain section of the crowd which insisted that it should be burnt.—API.

2. Dravida Kazhagam Activities

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Madras Province for the first half of May 1946. File No. 18/5/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

The Dravida Kazhagam continued to be active holding meetings and processions on 5th May 1946. Some unruly elements in a Dravida Kazhagam procession entered the Sri Subramanya Swamy Temple in Theagarayanagar, shouted anti-Brahmin slogans, banged the temple bell and removed the cloth from an idol...

3. Government Report of the Riots at Madurai Blackshirt Conference

Report by the Chief Secretary, Government of Madras, to the Secretary, Home Department, Government of India; Fort St George, 16 May 1946. File No. 5/9/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

*Fort St George,
16th May 1946.*

Sir,

The conference of Blackshirts which are being held in Madurai was to terminate on the 12th May 1946 with a meeting at the conference pandal in the Vaigai riverbed. Volunteers

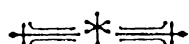
from other districts wearing black shirts had come for the conference to the extent of several hundreds. The conference was presided over by Mr E.V. Ramaswamy and was on Justice Party anti-Brahmin lines. Trouble began with a few stray affrays on Saturday the 11th evening and night. It is alleged that certain Blackshirts, at the Shri Meenakshi Temple, on the morning of the 12th May insulted a woman worshipper. Thereafter, there were one or two incidents of the burning of Blackshirt flags and there was a demonstration outside the shop where some of the Blackshirts were being fed. When the conference began in the morning on the 12th in the riverbed there was a concerted attempt to attack them by mobs arriving from different directions, many persons being armed with deadly weapons. The reserve police managed to keep the various groups of attackers at a distance till about 3 p.m. by occasional gas attacks. At about that time, a section of the mob numbering several thousands stoned the police, and the District Superintendent of Police and several officers received injuries. Fire was opened by the police killing one and injuring one. About the same time a small urchin eluded the police and set fire to the main pandal. Before this time, the police had shepherded the occupants of the pandal away from the scene of disturbance and kept them under strong guard, and the attention of the mob was then engaged on the pandal and Blackshirt flag on a tree nearby. The police again opened fire to avert the murder of a Blackshirt. No casualties occurred. Only one round was fired. As the main object of the attack, namely the pandal, had been burnt a large part of the crowd dispersed. At about 5 p.m. the crowd again became unruly and stoned the police very heavily from three sides. One constable was knocked out and several were hit. Fire was again opened (two rounds) as a result of which one person was killed. After this, the crowd gradually dispersed. The District Magistrate has issued orders under Section 144 CrPC (a) forbidding all processions and meetings and (b) imposing a curfew from 7.30 p.m. to 5.30 a.m. on the 12th night. The situation is now quiet; no incidents were reported after the 12th May.

Your obedient servant,
P.M. Nayak,
16/5/46,
for Chief Secretary to Govt.

4. Dravida Kazhagam Asks for Prohibition Throughout the Province

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Madras Province for the first half of June 1946.
Fortnightly Reports; Public (General) Department, Government of Madras (1946);
Tamil Nadu State Archives.

The Dravida Kazhagam of Thiruvannamalai division in North Arcot district held its first conference on 1-6-1946. Their leaders, E.V. Ramaswami Naicker presided and asked the present Ministry to introduce prohibition throughout the province and throw open temples to Harijans. He also appealed for Blackshirt Volunteer Corps to fight for 'Dravidastan'.



5. Caste Politics in Madras Province

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Madras Province for the second half of August 1946. Fortnightly Reports; Public (General) Department, Government of Madras (1946); Tamil Nadu State Archives.

'Poona Satyagraha Day' was observed by the Scheduled Castes Federation on 15-8-1946 under the presidency of Sri. N. Sivaraj, who recently renounced his title of Dewan Bahadur. The President pleaded for a separate electorate for the Scheduled Castes. The meeting was marked by constant heckling and disturbance by a section of the audience who also belonged to the Scheduled Castes Federation. The Dravida Kazhagam (Dravidian Federation) at a meeting at Madras on 25th August 1946 criticized the Congress for accepting the Interim Government without the cooperation of the Muslim League. A curious sidelight was the threat held out by this Dravida Kazhagam that in case of Hindu-Muslim trouble in the Province, the Dravidians would attack only Aryans.

6. Scheduled Castes' Federation, Dravida Kazhagam and Muslim League

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Madras Province for the second half of November 1946. Fortnightly Reports; Public (General) Department, Government of Madras (1946); Tamil Nadu State Archives.

Following the lead given by Mr Jinnah in nominating a Scheduled Caste Member to the Central Government as part of the Muslim League quota, there have been noticeable efforts made by local Muslim leaders to form an alliance with the Scheduled Castes. There are also signs that some of the Scheduled Caste Members in this Province have proved responsive to this appeal. Indeed, the Scheduled Castes Federation held several propaganda meetings at which the Scheduled Castes were exhorted to embrace Islam, and at a meeting at Vaniambadi on the 21st November 1946 E.V. Ramaswamy Naicker the leader of the Dravidian Federation stated that but for the Muslim League, Dravidians would have been crushed and that they would now get greater respect if they embrace Islam. The attitude of the Muslim League to Muslims who are not in sympathy with the League is reflected in a speech made at Salem by a member of the Muslim League, who characterised the Nationalist Muslims as stumbling blocks to the achievement of Pakistan who would be shot dead when Pakistan was finally achieved.

5.B.v United Provinces

1. Saharanpur Chamars Demand Increase in Wages

Extracts from Weekly Report No. 27, 5 July 1946. CID Records, Government of the United Provinces (1946); Uttar Pradesh State Archives.

... Scheduled and Depressed Classes meetings have been held at Lucknow and Saharanpur. In the former city the Ambedkarites at their meeting severely criticized the Congress and Caste Hindus. In the latter city, as a result of meeting organised by Jai Pal Singh, MLA, cultivation

has ceased because the Chamars who form the bulk of the labourers are demanding wages ranging from Rs 45 to Rs 60 a month....

2. Ambedkarites Demonstrate Outside Council Chamber, Lucknow

Extracts from Fortnightly, Report for the United Provinces for the first half of July 1946. File No. 18/7/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Political

... The latest belligerents in the provincial political field are the Scheduled Castes. In Lucknow supporters of Dr Ambedkar tried to break up a Congress meeting on June 24, and since July 15 they have been demonstrating against the Cabinet Mission, the Congress and the Poona Pact. In defiance of the ban imposed on processions they contemplated a demonstration outside the Council Chamber on the occasion of the opening of the Legislature of July 16. Arrests for defiance of orders now total over 250....

The Commissioners of Meerut and Bareilly both report an increase in ill-feeling and friction between members of the Depressed Classes and Caste Hindus. In Saharanpur Chamars are refusing to work in the fields unless paid from Rs 45 to Rs 60 a month, while Rajputs, Gujars and Jats have retaliated by the refusing to permit Chamars to graze their cattle, cut wood, etc. In Pilibhit Chamars have resolved not to carry bodies from police stations for postmortem examination. One Chamar was killed and 70 were injured when a large number of Gujars and others attacked and looted their colony in a village in Muzaffarnagar district, while in the Budaun district two persons were killed in a clash between Chamars and Thakurs.

3. 4 August, Protest Day Against Cabinet Mission

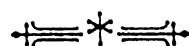
Extracts from Weekly Report No. 29, 26 July 1946. CID Records, Government of the United Provinces (1946); Uttar Pradesh State Archives.

... The provincial organisation of the Scheduled Castes Federation has issued a leaflet at Cawnpore calling upon its members to celebrate August 4 as a protest day against the award of the Cabinet Mission. At Lucknow, the Scheduled Castes satyagraha was received on July 22 when 13 satyagrahis from Cawnpore were arrested....

4. Etawah *Dalits* Criticise Zamindars

Extracts from Weekly Report No. 32, 16 August 1946. CID Records, Government of the United Provinces (1946); Uttar Pradesh State Archives.

... At Agra a batch of about 100 weavers started a hunger strike and picketing at the Supply Office because they could not obtain yarn. In Etawah on August 11, the Depressed Classes held a meeting (800) at which speeches urging unity, the introduction of social reforms and criticising zamindars were made....



5. Muslim League Addresses Scheduled Caste Meeting at Kanpur

Extracts from Weekly Report No. 37, 20 September 1946. CID Records, Government of the United Provinces (1946); Uttar Pradesh State Archives.

... About 150 *satyagrahi* volunteers of the Depressed Classes are said to have been enlisted at Agra. A Cawnpore meeting (600) of the Scheduled Castes was addressed by their own leaders and two Muslims Leaguers....

6. Kanpur Congress Unsuccessful in Winning Back *Dalits*

Extracts from Weekly Report No. 39, 11 October 1946. CID Records, Government of the United Provinces (1946); Uttar Pradesh State Archives.

... At Cawnpore, Congress efforts to win back the support of the Scheduled Castes have met with very little success....

7. *Dalits* Express Faith in B.R. Ambedkar and M.A. Jinnah

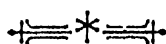
Extracts from Weekly Report No. 43, 8 November 1946. CID Records, Government of the United Provinces (1946); Uttar Pradesh State Archives.

... The Scheduled Castes accompanied by Muslims, attended the railway stations at Aligarh and Cawnpore in large numbers to greet the Hon'ble Jogendera Nath Mandal [Scheduled Caste nominated to the Constituent Assembly as Law Member by the Muslim League] when he passed through on his way to Delhi from Calcutta; speeches on these occasions expressed their gratitude to Mr Jinnah and their faith in Dr Ambedkar. At Lucknow, speakers criticized the Caste Hindus. At a Scheduled Castes Federation Conference (5000) at Unnao on November 3, attended by members from other districts speakers threatened *satyagraha* and a repetition of '1942' if their demands were not conceded by the Congress Government and Caste Hindus; Muslim Leaguers attended this Conference; police interference prevented a clash between Scheduled Castes and Caste Hindus when about 2000 of the latter displaying Congress flags and shouting Congress slogans tried to disrupt the proceedings of the Conference. The *achuts* have been active in Etawah and Farrukhabad also....

8. Allahabad Chamars Demand Better Service and Living Conditions

Extracts from Weekly Report No. 44, 15 November 1946. CID Records, Government of the United Provinces (1946); Uttar Pradesh State Archives.

... The Scheduled Castes were active in very few districts and no meetings of any importance were held by them. At Allahabad 3000 Chamars held a meeting and demanded amelioration of their service and living condition....



9. Bijnor and Saharanpur Hindus Open Temples to Dalits

Extracts from Weekly Report No. 48, 13 December 1946. CID Records, Government of the United Provinces (1946); Uttar Pradesh State Archives.

... At Bijnore and Saharanpur Hindus have opened their temples to the Depressed Classes and mixed with them socially....

... The Scheduled Castes have been active in two districts. At Agra the Ambedkarites and Congressites have issued leaflets criticising each other and appealing to the Depressed Classes to join their respective organisations....

10. Backward Classes Want Reservations Like Scheduled Castes

Extracts from a memorandum submitted by the Backward Classes Federation of India, Farrukhabad, to the President, Constituent Assembly, New Delhi; Farrukhabad, 14 December 1946. File No. CL 3 (Part 3); All India Congress Committee Papers (1946); Nehru Memorial and Library.

Sir,

... A vast bulk of Hindu population known as Ahirs and Sonars and many others had since long been kept away from education for reasons not to be discussed and expressed here for fear of mutual hatred but known to very honest and con[s]cious student of History and Politics. The three centuries British rule proclaiming equality for all or the Congress awakening for the last sixty years appear to have utterly failed so far to administer untainted justice to us resulting in the fact that [not] even a single individual out of 12 to 15 crores of Hindus ranged below the Brahmin, Chattrivya, Vaish or Kayastha, but not included in the Scheduled Castes, could meet the choice of being invited to the assembly [Constituent Assembly]....

... We Must emphatically, daringly and respectfully convince you that the garb of Sharma or Varma does render absolutely no help to one who from our fold goes hunting [for] a job in any office or department, already overcrowded and dominated by Kayasth[s] or ventures to seek election even to a minor political body. The progress of those already in service is badly retarded owing to caste prejudice boldly espoused by low minded Kayasths or Brahmins occupying prominent positions as gifts from the British rule and administration or as false success in the so called and maneuvered-by-themselves competitions. Their last resort is avowedly based on heredity claims.

The only remedy for the immediate relief to this huge bulk of humanity labouring under the pangs of perpetual torture since long, we can humbly suggest, is the remedy already administered to one minor part designated as Scheduled Castes, namely the reservation of seats, of course according to our proportion in population which amounts to 1/3 positively in the Farrukhabad district and probably in the United Provinces, in every office, department and local governing bodies. In the coming constitutional reforms 1/3 share of the Backwards according to population should be reserved for them and in particular they should get representation on this basis in the coming elections of Distt. Boards and Municipalities for which members of this class only be made eligible to seek election; the vacancies in the services be reserved for them according to number and the PWD should be specifically asked to appoint work agents and overseers from this fold as they are most suited for this work.

A partial test beginning can easily be made without touching the National or Hindus solidarity so arduously established by the patriots like your good self, by advising the Provincial Government representatives present in the Assembly to substitute their nominees in the local Boards by our caste fellows and instructing the heads of various departments.

The alternate remedy, though only a despondent cry, maybe to enlarge the Schedule[d] Caste[s] list by admitting those of us who may be found willing to try their luck for the political uplift from that hop.

We, feeling confident that this [memorandum] also like the one submitted to A.G. Kher, Esq, Parliamentary Secretary to ISG [?], UP Government on 4/9/1946, will not prove a cry in the wilderness in these days of general awakening, earnestly pray accordingly and anxiously wait to hear favourably as early as possible.

We beg to remain, as ever, Sir,
Your most obedient Servants (Numbering to millions),

1. Kashmir Singh Yadav,
BA, LLB, Vakil,
Patron BCFI,
Farrukhabad Branch.

2. Beni Madho Mukhtar,
A humble servant (Honorary) of BCFI,
Farrukhabad.

Castes of Backward Classes

Ahirs, Gaderiyas, Dhurias, Telis, Tamolis, Parsis, Barhais, Lohars, Kahars, Sunars, Darjis, Lodhas, Bhars, Aadwars, Kurmis, Kachhis, Murais, Leris, Kumhars, Nais, Bhurjis, Halwais, Thatheras, Malhas, Gorias, Koeris, Malis, Chaks, etc., etc.

11. Backward Classes Want Favourable Terms from Government, Congress

Resolution passed by the Executive Committee, United Provinces Nayee Brahman Sabha, Farrukhabad, and submitted to J.B. Kriplani, Congress President, New Delhi; Farrukhabad, 25 December 1946. File No. CL 3 (Part 3); All India Congress Committee Papers (1946); Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

This huge gathering of Backward Class People numbering to thousands hailing from Etah, Farrukhabad, Mainpuri, Aligarh Delhi, Muttra, Meerut, Bulandshahar and Allahabad, Lucknow, Mirzapur, Shahjahanpur, Hardoi, Budaun and Gwalior Districts request the Congress Government of the United Provinces to favourably view their (Backward Class People's) case also without loss of time lest these people may find themselves forced to search other avenues and therefore resolves:

1. That in view of the sacrifices made by these people in pushing forward the sacred cause of India's freedom espoused by the Congress and in lieu of their long suffering at the hands of so called high castes in almost every walk of life, they justifiably put and herewith emphatically press their due demands as below:

(a) Immediate steps should be taken to give them proportionate to numerical strength representation in the Central & Provincial governments and services under them.

(b) That they should be by removal of Government Nominees, immediately given seats in the existing municipal and district boards and services thereunder on their (Backward Class People) population basis.

(c) For future seats in Local Boards, Gram Panchyat[s] and all departmental services should be reserved for the Backward Class People according to population ratio.

(d) Departments such as Agriculture, Engineering and Public Works Department, etc., needing technical skill should be asked to replace the existing cadre by fellows coming from our respective castes and possessing special [in] stinct and particular bent for these professions as heritage in as much as they only can discharge the duties much better than other castes' fellows:

Kashmir Singh Yadav,
Vakil, PRESIDENT,
25/12/1946.

5.B.vi Bengal

1. Communist Scheduled Caste Electoral Candidate

Extracts from an article, 'Scheduled Caste fighter against social injustice'. *People's Age*, 20 January 1946.

(Primary elections are going on in Bengal for the Scheduled Caste seats for the Provincial Assembly. The Communist Party in Bengal is putting up its own Scheduled Caste candidates in Rangpur and Dinajpur.

What our Scheduled Caste comrades represent in the life of our people, what they have fought for in the past and what they will fight for in the future, can be seen from the life-sketch of Jiban Dhupi, Scheduled Caste Communist fighter, just released after eleven years in Jail.)

Dingamanik is a fairly big village in Faridpur District (Bengal) inhabited mostly by Hindu and Muslim middle-class folk. Here and there in this village live a few washermen families; they wash the clothes of the babus and help them go about cleanly dressed.

The dhobi families, of course, have no land of their own and are just village serfs. Generation after generation, they have washed clothes and in other ways slaved as serfs of the babus—in return for being allowed to live there. If they do not obey any of the orders of the babus, they are beaten mercilessly. If the babus want, they can drive these serfs from their hearths and homes.

His Father's Dream

It was in one such slave family that Jiban Dhupi was born. The little land which Jiban's father had got as a serf (or *chakran* as it is called), could not, of course, feed the family. Jiban's father had therefore to work as a field labourer and a sharecropper. And forced labour at the *Burra Babu's* house was of course obligatory....

Even under these conditions, Jiban's father would sometimes dream of getting his son educated, so that he could read and write, like the children of the babus. It was a very daring dream. Education for a *dhobi's* son? If the babus only heard of it, they would laugh their faces off....

A Memorable Day

Jiban used to go occasionally to the master's house with his children. There he used to see the little ones studying. One day the second son of the boss started taking some interest in him and showed him how to read and write the alphabets. He had the good fortune to become a free student at the *Pathshala*....

... The village *bhadralogs* were not very pleased to see the *dhobi*'s son standing first in all the examinations from first to last. Jiban thus got admitted into the local English High School.

This was too much for the babus of the village. One of them burst out straight on Jiban's face: "This is horrible---allowing a *dhobi* boy to become a scholar! At this rate, we shall not be able to show our face in the village any more."

The inhuman treatment and social oppression by the Caste Hindus on his community, which society had sanctioned and made sacrosanct, affected the young boy's heart deeply. From those days as he grew up, he became steeled in the determination to fight for social justice and equality, to fight against all the humiliation and oppression inflicted by Caste Hindu society on their unfortunate brethren....

The Episode of the Festival

... Once a young girl of a Caste Hindu family fell seriously ill. Somebody was urgently required to nurse her. Jiban was called in to do the job. He hesitated a bit. Had he the right to sit by the bedside of a *bhadralog*? But the call of duty proved strong enough. He acted as nurse tirelessly day after day and in the end brought the patient back to health.

But this incident caused not a little trouble in the village. The gentleman who had taken Jiban's help was socially boycotted. Jiban could never forget this incident and the barbarous behaviour against the *Acchyutes* (Untouchables) by the Caste Hindus. From those days, he strove his utmost to educate the untouchable boys and make them stand up for their human rights.

The elders of the Caste Hindus could never forget that Jiban was an Untouchable. They were forced by their own children to allow them to play with him, but none of the parents would ever let him touch their food.

Ram Thakur's festival in the village. It was to be held in the house of a well-to-do Brahmin. *Prasad* would be distributed to nearly six to seven thousand persons. Schoolboys would be acting as volunteers. Brahmins would do the cooking, but the other Caste Hindus would serve the food.

The Untouchables were of course outlawed from this whole festival; they had no right to play any part in it. But the schoolboys elected Jiban as the Captain of the volunteers. Jiban was aware of his status so he declined the honour. But the boys would not listen— they insisted on making him Captain and got down to work. At the end they organised the Kitchen and Jiban was sent to serve the food to the invites.

The *bhadralogs* were furious, they hurled filthy abuses and left the festival in protest. But the festival did not stop; the boys continued the whole show very efficiently and saw it through. The whole village was in an uproar....

Into Active Political Career

The year 1933. Jiban was only a young lad then. That was the time when most of the leaders of the Anushilan Party (a terrorist group) were arrested. A section of those who were outside began to think in terms of socialism—Jiban came in contact with them. Terrorism—for a socialist aim—shook his young mind and drew him into a political career.

Those were the darkest days of repression against the terrorists. The 'Black and Tan' rule was the order of the day. The District Magistrate of Faridpur himself visited the schools and forbade the boys to mix with the terrorists. Everybody among the boys listened in silence, but not Jiban Dhupi. He got up and asked: "Why shall we not mix with the terrorists? What is their crime? And if you do not tell us their names, how are we to know them then?"

The teachers and local *bhadrals* present hearing Jiban's words were struck dumb with terror. What the District Magistrate wrote subsequently in the Inspection Book is not known, but all the boys were thrilled and inspired by Jiban's fearlessness.

Things could not go on quietly in this way for a long time. A revolutionary terrorist absconder took shelter in Jiban's house. The Police got scent of it, surrounded the house and arrested the absconder and together with him Jiban. This was in the year 1934. Jiban was then a student of the Matric Class. He was sent to jail.

Jail: Under the Banner of the Communist Party

In Faridpur jail he came in touch with Muzaffer Ahmed (the Bengal Communist leader) and for the first time came to know about the Communist Party. After two years of jail, in the famous Titagarh Conspiracy Case, Jiban was awarded five years' rigorous imprisonment.

Later on, during the period of the 'Release Political Prisoners' movement, he was offered a conditional release, but he refused it; he would submit to no condition from the Imperialist rulers. After serving full five years, Jiban was again held back as a Security Prisoner for four more years....

2. Intra-Scheduled Castes Political Rivalry

Extracts from Paragraphs for Monthly Summary for the Cabinet; 14 January 1947. File No. 5/12/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Bengal (First and Second Halves of December)

The competition of the leaders of Scheduled Castes Federation and the Scheduled Caste Nationalists gave rise to serious tension and feelings were in an inflammable state in the Gopalganj subdivision, Faridpur District. The Commissioner, Presidency Division, emphasises that in the adjoining subdivision of Narail in Jessore district there is still cause for anxiety largely due to tension between the Namasudras and Muslims.

5.B.vii Punjab

1. Plight of Harijans in the Punjab

Extracts from a letter to the editor titled, 'Harijans in the Punjab'. *Hindustan Times*, 2 April 1946.

Sir,

I wish to draw the attention of the Punjab Government and the MLA's in the Provincial Assembly to the Harijan problem—to the constructive work they can take up in order to uplift them.

The popular notion about the Harijan problem is that it is social. Its most obvious manifestation is the curse of untouchability which debars Harijans from using public well, visiting temples and enjoying other social amenities open to other sections of the Hindu community. No legislature true to its democratic professions can tolerate such inhuman disabilities to which Harijans as a class are subjected.

It would, however, be an oversimplification to consider the Harijan problem as social only. Even an elementary acquaintance with the conditions in which they live would show that it is as much economic and political as it is social and it must be tackled in all its aspects if a satisfactory solution is to be obtained.

The practice of untouchability in the use of public amenities and utilities should be declared [a] penal [offence], and all civic disabilities forbidding their free use by Harijans should be removed forthwith....

A large majority of Harijans, particularly Chuhra and Chamars, are found to be following agricultural pursuits as tenants, farm servants and agricultural labourers all over the Province. And yet it is a strange irony of fate that they are treated on par with the moneylending castes and forbidden to alienate agricultural land in their favour under the Land Alienation Act.

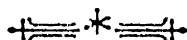
Harijans are paying as customary house-tax to the landowners in Ambala Division called *Kudi* as ground rent for the use of the sites on which they have to build their houses. Such customary exactions are manifestly unjust and must be forthwith abolished.

Along with other landless classes in the Punjab—quite a large number of Harijans are cultivating the soil as tenants-at-will. Their plight is generally miserable.

It is imperative in the interest of Harijans and other poor class of tenants that their period of lease is raised to at least five years and landlords are given from one-fourth to one-sixth of the produce from the land leased by them.

Industrial cooperatives for the purchase of raw materials and production and sale of finished goods should be formed among artisan sections. Harijans, i.e., shoemakers and weavers, and the system of State purchases should be so ordered that their goods receive preferential treatment from the Government....

Mohan Lal,
Secretary,
Harijan Sewak Sangh, Punjab.



5.C REGIONAL ISSUES

5.C.i Assam and the Northeast

1. Bengali Immigration into Assam

Extracts from a letter by Khagendra Nath Samadder, MLA, Nowgong, Assam, to Dr Shyama Prasad Mukherjee, President, All India Hindu Mahasabha, Calcutta; Nowgong, 12 May 1946. File No. C-116; All India Hindu Mahasabha Papers (1946); Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

*Nowgong, Assam,
12 May, 1946.*

Dear Sir,

It must have attracted your notice that the problem of immigrants in Assam, more accurately in Assam Valley, [has] engaged and is engaging the political leaders' minds and it has of late assumed such a proportion specially in view of the anticipated far-reaching chances [implications?], that I cannot but draw your pointed attention to the problem and I beg to place before you the following facts in the hope that you would kindly move in the matter and bring pressure on the Assam Cabinet so that a satisfactory solution might be reached in this behalf.

At the outset I should like to make it clear that when the people of Assam use the word 'immigrant', they mean Bangalee immigrants Hindus and Muslims and for all practical purposes, the immigrants from other Provinces are left out of consideration and it is in this restricted sense that the word is used by the Government as usual in matters of settlement and eviction.

The Congress Government in Assam have taken and are taking steps boldly for eviction of the unlawful encroachers from the Professional Grazing Reserves and other places apparently under the Bordalai-Sadullah pact of 1945 and as sequence thereof, the land settlement policy is also being reviewed and revised and under this cover, the lurking anti-Bengalee feeling seems to be taken [taking] concrete shape over again. It would be stating a better [bitter?] truth when I say that at least 90% of the Assamese people and the majority of the MLA's from Assam Valley have very strong opinion against the immigration by the Bengalees. Being strongly opposed to the Pakistan Scheme, which all nationally minded Indians should be and are, outwardly their [they are] opposed to the Muslim immigrations [immigrants] but in their heart of hearts, they are very much against the Hindu Bengalee immigrants as well. The problem of the future dearth of land is therefore certainly [certain] but their major fear seems to be against being very much influenced by Bengalee language and culture.

In the Assam Valley districts the Bengalee Muslim immigrants numbers about 15 (fifteen) lakhs, while the Bengalee Hindu immigrants numbers about 60 to 70 (sixty to seventy) thousands. Of the Bengalee Hindu immigrants, 80% are Namasudras, and the majority of the remaining twenty per cent are Koches (Scheduled in Bengal), Naths, including some backward castes from Sylhet, the immigrant Caste Hindus form a microscopic percentage of the population and they are mostly residence [residents] of towns and mofasil business centers. The Hindus immigrants it might be said without prejudice to others [are] law-abiding and they have proved themselves to be very good neighbours to the Assamese people and the Assamese people in

the villages have always welcomed them as their neighbours, except where political considerations intervened.

The Sadullah Government was in power in Assam for the last 5 (five) years. During these [this] period thousands and thousands of bighas of wastelands were thrown open for settlement and settled with immigrants, 90% of the lands having been settled with immigrant Muslims, as was possibly the policy of the then Government, since without exceptions, the Development Officers and Colonization Officers were all Muslims and accordingly the Muslim immigrants had preferential settlement. Terribly frightened at the heavy onrush of the Muslim immigrants, which is not in the power of Assamese Hindus to stop, they invited and welcomed the Bengalee Hindu immigrants, specially the Namasudras [and] Koches, to settle down in the neighborhood, so that they might operate as bulwark against any possible aggression of criminal nature. The case of the Bengalee Hindu immigrants have always gone by the default, since at one time, soon after the introduction [of the] vernacular [as] the medium of instruction in schools [and] the Calcutta University, the feelings against them ran high for their unwillingness to give up Bengalee language, and [this] coupled with the Colonization Officers being Muslims always [has] operate[d] against them. When however, they were persuaded to settle down as neighbors of the Assamese people as a protection against the increasing Muslims, the Bengalee Hindu immigrants, who have been here in this district from well over 20 years without a plot of land of their own and dragging on [eking out] a very miserable existence in consequence, readily agreed and settled down on the lands shown to them as available as such by the Lot Mandals and Kanungues (be it stated here that the Lot Mandals and Kanungues reaped quite [an] economic harvest out of the situation) and unsuspectingly the Bengalee Hindu immigrants so settled spent all their savings in clearing jungles, making the lands fit for cultivation and habitation and in constructing their houses thereon and all these since over 3 (three) years and they were all along beguiled with the assurances that Pattas would be issued in their favour in due course and simple, uneducated people as they are, they put absolute reliance on assurances of the Lot Mandals and supervising Kanungues. These people fulfilled the requirements (protected Ryots), as defined in the Bordolai-Sadullah pact and as a matter of fact, most of them came as has [been] said before, more than 20 years back. Most of them [have] not lands more than 5 or 6 bighas.

As a corollary to the move for eviction there is a very strong move in the Assam Valley not to allow any further settlement with anyone except the Assamese and in accordance with [this] move, the settlement of lands in the Hindus' immigrant block at Langia in Laokhowa Game Reserve, which had the sanction of the previous Government for settlement, has been stopped by the present Government for settlement, and a prominent Congress MIA from Nowgong has made the proposal to the Government that these lands should be settled with the Assamese people. I should state here more clearly that, maybe as a policy of 'Divide and Rule', the leaders amongst the Assamese people have been generous enough to treat non-Bengalee non-Assamese people. Nepalese, ex-tea garden coolies, Panjabis, Deshwalies and others, as Assamese and for all practical purpose[s], they do not suffer from these bans on the Bengalee Hindu immigrants. The Bengalee Hindu immigrants would be the worst sufferers under the present move. They have suffered under the Sadullah Government, suffered during the pre-autonomous Government and are going to suffer under the present Government.

The statistics of the settlement of wastelands with the immigrants would show that more than 90 (ninety) per cent of the wastelands were and have been settled with Muslims immigrants.

The Bengalee Hindu immigrants suffered previously since they happened to be Hindus and now they are going to suffer since they happen to be Bengalees. Irony of fate indeed.

The following are sum [some] of the instances of eviction of the Bengalee Hindu immigrants in the district of Nowgong, Assam, some already carried into effect and others in the process of being evicted.

1. The house of Madhav Namasudra and another of village Beradia, Mouza Mayang, have been destroyed, crops damaged, and the people rendered homeless and exposed to starvation.

2. The houses of Debendra Sarkar and three others of village Murrandhwa, Mouza Laokhowa, have been attached and fined imposed on them, and they are treated as encroachers in the Assamese line[s] though they settled down there three year back and from the beginning of the settlement there, under orders of the authorities. Maulavi Manuawar Ali, ex-Revenue Minister visited their houses in course of his visit to the locality.

3. Eviction orders have been passed and notices served on:

(i) 41 (forty-one) localities of four different villages in Mouza Mayang. There are about 100 (hundred) families altogether in these villages;

(ii) 23 (twenty-three) families in three different villages in Gobha Mouza. There are about 60 (sixty) families altogether in these villages;

(iii) 31 (thirty-one) families in three different villages in Bokuni Mouza. There are altogether about 70 (seventy) families in these villages.

(iv) 46 (forty-six) families in three different villages in Bokuni Mouza. There are altogether about 70 (seventy) families in these villages.

(v) 14 (fourteen) families in Lanka Mouza.

(vi) 26 (Twenty-six) families in Namati Mouza; and many other families in other Mouzas.

In nos 1, 2 and 3 notices have so far been served on the families, which are the leading families in the villages; either the rest of the families have been reserved for the second instalment of eviction or maybe, as has been found on experience that when the leading families have been evicted by the authorities, the other families, who follow those leading families vacate the lands on the more [mere] threat of the prospective issue of notices, it is expected that they would vacate as a matter of course

I take this opportunities [opportunity] of bringing to your notice some unfortunate instances of oppression and atrocious acts perpetrated [perpetrated] on the Namasudras in the villages Nandanbari and Chhota Garajan in Mouza Goghua by the Assamese Lalung (tribal) people. The settlers in the villages were persuaded to go there by these Lalung people and the Namasudras settled down there under orders of the authorities but caught up in the wave of the new move the Lalung people who have not the soundness of judgement have driven the move for evicting the Bangalee immigrants to an excess, have as reported burnt down the houses of the Namasudras, inflicted grievous hurt on them and committed other acts of oppression. I am afraid, this is only a beginning of the miseries that are in store for the Bengalee Hindu immigrants.

I hope you will appreciate the grave and critical situation that the Bengalee Hindu immigrants are today faced with in Assam Valley and unless you kindly move in the matter, the situation will, I am afraid, grow more and more worse. Hon'ble Sjt Gupinath Bordalai and Hon'ble Sjt Baidya Nath Mukherjee will be reaching Calcutta on the 15th May on their way to New Delhi. In the name of the suffering Bengalee Hindu immigrants, I would appeal to you to discuss the situation with Sjt Bordalai and Sjt Mukherjee and evolve a solution for saving these

poor Namasudras from the grip of ruin and death. 50 (fifty) at least out of 62 (sixty-two) Congress MLA's are sympathetic towards the pitiable lot of these Namasudra immigrants but the decision lies with the Hon'ble Premier and Hon'ble Revenue Minister. If by reason of these Namasudras being Bengalee immigrant Hindus, the present Congress Government would find it difficult to help them on that score, [then] the problem can be easily solved by their being either treated as Assamese or as belonging to the backward scheduled castes and by their being held as entitled to settlement of lands in the Assamese block. A declaration by the Government that the backward and scheduled castes would be treated as Assamese would solve the situation.

I hope to be favoured with a reply.

Sincerely yours,
Khagendra Nath Samadder.
MLA, Nowgong, Assam.

2. Assamese Fear Cabinet Mission's Grouping Proposals

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Assam for the second half of May 1946. File No. 18/5/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Political

There has now been time for reactions to the Cabinet Missions scheme to become fairly clear. There is quite a considerable degree of independent thinking on the subject, and opinions vary a good deal in detail, with a general feeling that so far as Bengalis are concerned the scheme is tolerable, while so far Assam's other people are concerned, it will be detrimental to their best interest. The main feature lies in the repercussions from racial sentiment. The Bengali-speaking peoples are inclined to welcome the group system as at least a partial approach to the Great Bengal of their desire, though recognising that it falls far short of this. The Assamese on the other hand fear that the association with Bengal unless on terms of equality endangers their distinctive character, and the protest made by the Hon'ble Premier at Delhi is endorsed among the Assamese-speaking peoples of the Assam Valley. The apprehension entertained does not merely lie in the possibility of Assam being virtually forced to "group" subjects on which complete autonomy would be preferred; there is probably genuine anxiety lest the Group decision might lead to a submerging of the Assamese as a separate people and of the province as a whole even if they were in a position to determine the form of Assam's constitution. Despite the independence of thought to which allusion has been made, such thought is still very confused and Utopian expressions like "a strong Central Government with full autonomy for the Provinces" are still ventilated as signifying the real demand of the people. The Muslim League generally welcomes this scheme, which has the merit of dissolving the unrealities which had surrounded Pakistan from the point of view of the Muslims in Assam, though the Muslims of the Assam Valley are not quite so certain that they will benefit more from communal support in the group than from the complete isolation of all Assamese peoples. The scheme may have an advantage in discounting perennial controversy regarding the possibility of separating Sylhet, or both this district and the partially Bengali-speaking districts of Cachar and Goalpara, from Assam proper....

3. Naga Hills Tribesmen Want Separate Electorates

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Assam for the second half of July 1946. File No. 18/7/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Political

... Interesting items are a report from the Naga Hills that the Naga Tribes, while acquiescing in the prospect of a constitution which would bind them to Assam, object to grouping with Bengal and separate electorate with safeguards; and the formation of a "Khasi and Jaintia Hills War Services Boys' Association" in Shillong which seems to connect with rumours of joint action by the Khasis to demonstrate their claims to recognition as a separate people. A visit by Mr Jaipal Singh attracted little general attention.

4. Tribal Clash in Siang Valley, Assam

Memo dated 19 September 1946 by P.L.S. James, Assistant Political Officer, Siang Valley, Assam. File No. 7/15/46; Home (Police) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

The following is a detailed account compiled after hearing all parties' stories of the events leading up to and included in the recent incident at Karko between A.R. [Armed Reserve] troops and Solong village. For Information Solong is a village of some 67 houses which in conjunction with the villages of Gosang (47) and Noying (22) make up the so-called village of Koni.

For some years past Koni have always tried to prevent the village of Koku from taking fish from the Siruk stream which is on Koni land and belongs in the most part of Koni, although some Koku men have bought small stretches of it.

Every year at this time it is the custom for the Koni Bane (the village community) to poison the stream with various vegetables and to collect the fish so poisoned. This is done by the village and fish are taken from the stream irrespective of whether particular parts of the stream belong to individuals or not. This is their custom. The so-called poisoning of the stream is called Tamu Runam. This year at first Koni Bane did not do the Tamu Runam properly, and the story is that some of Koni tired of their efforts and told one or two of Koku village that Koku should try their luck. On hearing this Koni village leaders sent two messages saying that Koku were not to touch the stream. The Koku young men would however not listen, and proceeded to do the Tamu Runam. Koni, who had warned them against doing this, were furious and besides beating one Koku woman (wife of Kakep of Koku) they cut some of Koku's crops in revenge. One Manyuk Apang of Koku tried to get a fine from Koni for the beating of Kakep of Koku's wife. Failing, he threatened that he would make the troops arrest the actual beater, who was Kanying Nokar. After this the Koku Gams came to the Outpost and said that when the next patrolling party went out he would get the Interpreter to find out about the incident, but in the meantime no one was to fight the other.

On the 24th August which was the patrolling day, the Havildar instructed the Interpreter Kajenang Borang to go with the patrolling party (the usual custom) to find out the facts of the case, and to get in the Koni Gams for council at the post. It is admitted that he gave orders that there should be no "gulmal". The Koku Games also accompanied the patrol.

On reaching the village, the Interpreter found it deserted, and sent a small boy, and subsequently, Balok Jonke, Gam of Koku, to call the Gams and leading men to meet him.

According to all information Balok instead of doing this in the proper manner, ran down the path and catching up with the Koni Bane who had just started off to do Tamu Runam in a big stream called the Syrnyuk proceeded to give the war cry and say that the village was being attacked. There was some doubt as to his actual words, but there was no doubt that his manner of calling was provocative in the extreme, and it led the Koni Bane to return posthaste to the village, arm themselves and appear in full war kit before the patrol, who were peaceably taking tea in the village. After seeing the Interpreter they went into the Mosup (young men's house) and sat there. The Interpreter called to them to come out and hold council but they refused. The Interpreter, with four Sepoys as an escort, then went into the Mosup in an effort to try to find out what the facts of the Koni Koku quarrel were. Some of the older men of Koni, the leaders of the council agreed to pay compensation to Koku for the destruction of their crops, but the young "bucks who were in a bad mood, should then down [sic], and the Interpreter, seeing this first said that in that case he would take string of beads as a show of good faith that Koni would really pay Koku, and that the Koni Gams should come to the post where proper council should be held outside. Saving this, he (this is verified by the old man himself) turned to an old man and catching him by the waist said "old man come with me, we will hold council outside." On this the Bane got up and started to beat up the Interpreter and the four troops. They state they thought the Interpreter was trying to arrest the old man. They cut the Interpreter and knocked over the Sepoy and then started shooting arrows at the remaining Sepoys standing outside.

Some of the Sepoys outside then opened fire, in self-defence though they say they shot in the air to frighten the Bane who were attacking them. The villagers also agreed that they saw the Sepoys firing in the air. It was, as far as I can judge, an unlucky shot that actually killed the Koni man. The Interpreter says he saw the dead man covered with blood. The other so-called wounded men had very slight wounds and cannot definitely state that they were bullet wounds.

After this the Bane withdrew slightly and the Havildar in charge of the patrol managed to get his men together, and retire.

My own views on the whole incident are follows:

1. The OC [Officer in Charge], Outpost has definite orders to arrest if possible and necessary for the preservation of the peace anyone who tries to start a fight. If the OC had not sent the patrol to the village in an attempt to pacify the parties, there would undoubtedly have been a full-scale war between Koku and Koni. This would have led to a complete break in our communications, and might have spread to a full-scale war with other villages on the lines of communication. I think no blame can be attached to the Havildar in temporary charge of the Outpost except that he ought to have informed the APO [Assistant Political Officer] in the first instance when the Koku villages reported the destruction of their crops by Koni, which seems to have been about the 20th.

2. The patrolling party cannot I consider, be blamed to any great extent either. They tried to obey orders, and only fired on provocation, and in self-defence.

3. The Interpreter is I consider most to blame.

Seeing the dangerous attitude of the Bane he should not have tried to get them to hold council, he should merely have told both parties not to fight each other, and then sent me a report through the OC.

On the other hand I am of the opinion that the main blame lies with the two villages concerned. For four years now, there has been a post at Karko and both villages have always been in the habit of referring any cases they cannot settle by themselves to the Interpreters, and have always accepted the decision of people who are outside the quarrel. Koku had no right whatever to do Tamu Runam in the Koni Stream. This was the start of the whole quarrel, and was undoubtedly an act of pure mischief. The Gams are greatly to blame for not trying to stop the Koku Bane from doing this. The Koku Gams also in my opinion tried to use the Interpreter and troops to further their own interests, this can be seen from Balok's action in calling the Koni Bane in the way he did. Koni were similarly in the wrong in cutting the Koku cultivation, without first trying to get the case settled by the ordinary means.

When I first came up this valley with Mr Williams there was a big dispute going on between the Koku Bane and a sub-clan of the Apang called Sutum. The result of this quarrel was that the Minyong village of Riga and the main parent villages of Bomdo and Simong were about to start a war against Karko (the tribal name of Koku, Ramsing and Koni). With great difficulty Mr Williams managed to get the Sutum people received back by Koku, and thus averted a war which would have meant that no progress up the valley could be effected, without recourse to open war, with troops, against all the villages concerned. The present quarrel would have spread, I consider, in the same way had efforts been made to stop it. If it had spread, all the work accomplished during the last four years in this area would have been wasted, and there would have been no chance of doing the proposed big tour to meet the Tibetan tax-collecting official, near the border, this year.

Both these villages have a bad reputation for causing trouble, and if it were not for the presence of the post, they would have been driven out by the very much more powerful villages of other clans surrounding them. I have fined Koni five mythan and Koku four. Of these seven mythan have been given to the dead man's relatives as "midum" (blood money). One mythan has been, according to custom, given to the dead man's wife's relations. The dead man's relations had eaten a mythan of Apiang Jonke of Koku after the death of the man. The remaining mythan taken as a fine has therefore been given to Apiang.

The case is thus closed, I do not consider that Government should have to pay anything in this case.

There is a question whether the Interpreter should be punished. In my opinion he may, if P.O. [Political Officer] considers fit, be fined, but I think that the most that can be brought against him is a charge of tactless handling of the incident. He himself got badly beaten up, and has I think learnt his lesson. Perhaps P.O. will discuss when I return.

I took a large number of outside Gams up with me to settle this affair, and the action taken has pleased all concerned, and peace has been established again. Both Koku and Koni paid up their fines without difficulty, and in fact Koni itself seemed to have expected a heavier fine. However taking the Interpreter's tactless handling of the affair into consideration, I deliberately did not impose too heavy a fine.

I think it unlikely that there will be any further trouble over this affair now. However I have instructed the OC Karko to keep a careful watch. The Interpreter has also been forbidden to hold further councils without my permission, until I am satisfied that no further trouble is likely to arise.

5.C.ii Bihar

1 A Case for Mithila Autonomy

Letter from Subhadia Jha, a Mithila patriot residing in Paris, to All India States People's Conference; Paris, 6 March 1946. File No. 249; All India States People's Conference Papers (1946); Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

Paris,
6/03/46.

My dear Countryman,

... I am a resident of Mithila, in the modern district of Darbhanga. Everyone knows that Mithila formed an independent administrative unit from the earliest times. It is culturally unique from the rest of the province of Bihar, in which it is at present mainly included. During the late Muhammadan period Mithila was made a part of Bihar, which was added to Bengal. Later when Bihar was separated from Bengal, Mithila was added to it.

Now Mithila is linguistically an independent province. Its language is Maithili. This language Maithili is recognised as a subject of study for the different examinations of the universities of Calcutta, Patna and Benaras. But for reasons not conceivable, the Congress people think Mithila to be a Hindi speaking area, even though in the opinion of a man like Dr Sachchidananda Singha Hindi is a foreign idiom not only in Mithila but in the whole of Bihar.

There was never a province like Bihar in ancient time, nor there is anything like Bihari language and literature that may be common to the different parts of the so called province of Bihar. There is nothing like Bihari culture. Be as it may, in case of others, but for Mithila, I cannot but request you to consider her claim for constitution into a separate province or sub-province. It is necessary for maintenance of language and culture of Mithila for which every Indian ought to be proud of.

Requesting to be excused.

Yours sincerely,
Subhadia Jha.

2. *Adibasis* Support for Muslim League

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Bihar for the second half of April 1946. File No. 18/4/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Adibasis

The Jharkhand Province Rally took place in Ranchi on the 14th April and about 15,000 persons, including a fairly large number of women, were present. Mr Jaipal Singh was voted to the chair and resolutions were passed advocating the creation of a separate province of Jharkand, condemning the action of Congressmen at Tapkara who are alleged to have been responsible for the death of 5 Adibasis, calling for speedy trial of the criminal cases in the above connection and, finally, asking that licenses for running control shops should be given to the Muslims and Adibasis. A number of members of the Muslim League were present at the meeting and some of them actually spoke. Jaipal Singh, in the course of his speech, exhorted the Adibasis to give full support to the Muslim League.

3. *Adivasis* and the Congress

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Bihar for the first half of May 1946. File No. 18/5/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Adibasis

In Ranchi a number of meetings were held, at one of which it was decided to form a society to eliminate the non-aboriginal merchants and dealers in the rural areas. It is evident that the Muslim League in Bengal and Jaipal Singh have entered into some sort of alliance to give each other support mainly in the way of publicity. Exaggerated reports of the Tapkara incident, which occurred during the election campaign and which has been mentioned in earlier reports, have appeared and Jaipal Singh openly stated that the number given by Mr Suhrawardy in a statement in Bengal were not exaggerated. He himself has entered into an alliance of this kind before when, as the Commissioner of Chota Nagpur observes, he ranged himself with Subhas Chandra Bose and the Forward Bloc at the time of the Ramgarh Congress Session.

The Commissioner admits that there is still a certain amount of bitterness among certain sections of the Adibasis against the Congress due partly to the ill-feeling aroused by fiercely contested elections and partly to the Tapkara incident which is being exploited to the full. But he considers that there are other causes, one of which is economic, since the aboriginals in the villages have often had to pay excessive prices for commodities sold to them by non-aboriginal dealers. The situation will be carefully watched since the realisation by aboriginals of exploitation by non-aboriginals has led to serious consequences in the past.

4. *Adivasis* Not to Participate in Muslim League's Direct Action Day

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Bihar for the first half of September 1946. File No. 18/9/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Political

Mr Jaipal Singh is reported to have resisted the attempts of the Muslims League leaders to induce Adibasis to give support to the Muslim League 'direct action', and in Jamshedpur sent round word by beat of drum that they were not to take any part in such activities or to attend the reception given to Manek Homi of the Radical Party on his return from America. Mr Jaipal Singh is apparently waiting to see how the political situation develops before he shows his hand.

5. Jaipal Singh Addresses a Large *Adivasi* Gathering Near Ranchi

Extracts from Fortnightly Report for Bihar for the second half of September 1946. File No. 18/9/46; Home (Political) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Political

There was little Adibasi activity until the 29th September when a big meeting was held at Pathalkudwa near Ranchi comprising about 5000 persons including 1500 ladies. Mr Jaipal

Singh made the opening speech demanding a Jharkhand province separate from Bihar. He expressed satisfaction that the people of Chota Nagpur did not take part in quarrels such as had occurred in Calcutta and said that he had been invited to attend a meeting of the Advisory Committee of the Constituent Assembly and would do so.... He did not expect any help from the Congress Ministry in spite of their Advisory Board for aboriginal and depressed classes uplift. He exhorted the Adibasis to remain steady to fight with their arrows and bows for the freedom of Jharkhand and appealed for funds. Other speeches were made by persons including some women and a girl who is a sixth year student. One of the women had a bow and arrows in her hand.

5.D WOMEN AND FREEDOM

1. All India Women's Conference Report

Extracts from a news report, 'Women's Conference demands repeal of DIR'. *Statesman*, 1 January 1946.

Hyderabad (Sind), December 30. The All India Women's Conference passed a resolution today demanding immediate withdrawal of the Defence of India Regulations, restoration of complete freedom of speech, press, association and movement, immediate and unconditional release of all political prisoners, particularly of those who had been detained indefinitely without trial and those who had already served life sentences or had put in long years in jail.

The Conference resolved that Indian women be encouraged to qualify as midwives and nurses and demanded that better salaries be guaranteed for nurses throughout India and that more training centres be established. The resolution was proposed by Dr Tarabai Punniyah and seconded by Dr Laxmidevi Mirchandani.

The Conference viewed with alarm the acute scarcity of cloth in the country.

It suggested that in view of the fact that the efforts so far made to meet the emergency had been totally ineffectual, the Government should release immediately, for civilian consumption, all cloth produced in India, increase the cloth quotas to meet the minimum demands, fix ceiling prices for cloth, take vigorous measures against the infringement of control orders and rules, give every facility to the textile industry to increase production, help weavers to obtain adequate quantities of yarn, start handspinning and weaving centres in rural areas to give immediate relief to villagers and take measures to prevent foreign markets from exploiting the present situation.

The Conference expressed grave concern over the acute shortage of houses in big cities and called upon the Government to restore all public and private buildings commandeered for war purposes.

While appreciating the beginnings made by some provincial Governments and municipalities in town planning, the resolution urged upon all provincial Governments to initiate legislation making it obligatory on municipalities and employers to construct houses for labourers and the middle-classes. The conference called on district boards to plan and carry out reconstruction of village houses.

Maintaining that the exclusion of any individual on the basis of class or caste from any institution or sphere of activity is incompatible with ideal democracy, the Conference urged recognition of the right to use wells, schools, hospitals and other amenities.

The resolution was proposed by Miss Jhabwala and seconded by Mrs Khandkar.

The Conference passed a resolution on Palestine stating that, whereas the Conference stands for peace and is against the forcible imposition of the will of strong nations on weak nations, it views with great concern the situation in Palestine—the home of Arabs where they have built up their own culture and have lived at peace with the people of all faiths....

The Conference viewed with alarm the growing economic crisis in the country due to the famine, floods, high cost of living and the prospect of mass unemployment.

While emphasising that only a National Government could effectively deal with this problem, the Conference demanded that vocational centres for training unskilled destitutes and other women be opened, that cottage industries be started and that employment in peacetime industries be provided for those who had been thrown out of their jobs. The resolution was proposed by Miss Peria Ramesh Chandra and seconded by Kapila Khandawala.

The Conference reiterated its demand for universal adult-franchise and deplored the existing restrictions on the right to vote.

It condemned the manner in which preparations had been made for the coming elections. A large number of qualified voters would not be able to exercise their right as sufficient time for revision of rolls had not been given and as fees had been charged in some cases for registering applications.

The Conference emphatically protested against the highly cumbersome procedure followed regarding registration of women voters thereby further reducing their limited voting strength.

The resolution was moved by Lady Rama Rao of Bombay, who spoke in Hindustani. It was seconded by Vidyavati Seth (Punjab) and carried unanimously.

By another resolution, the Conference hoped that the draft Hindu code would be introduced in the Central Legislature at an early date and that the newly-elected Assembly would support the code and put it on statute book....

The Conference deplored the high-handed action of the authorities responsible for firings and lathi charges on peaceful processions of unarmed students in Calcutta, Lahore and Bombay in connection with the INA demonstrations and urged immediate investigation by a representative and impartial tribunal of officials and nonofficials. The Conference adopted the accounts for the year presented by Dr Sukhththankir (Bombay).

The Conference adopted the report on social work read by the Member-in-Charge, Mrs Kitty Shiva Rao.

Mrs Jhabwala's report on Harijan welfare work stated, among other things, that "work had varied from branch to branch, but had generally included literary classes, maternity work, distribution of clothes, milk and improvement of hygienic conditions."

The report observes, "unless the barriers between the Harijans and the other communities are removed, no progress is possible."

Mrs Kitty Shiva Rao suggested that the use of the term Harijan constituted an unhealthy distinction between one class and another. "What we really want to work for is equal status for all communities in regard to wells, roads and social services maintained out of public funds."

Mrs Shiva Rao told the Conference that the traffic in women and children had not only increased during the last year or two, but had taken a new aspect on account of the economic distress in India, especially in the famine areas.

The food shortage in some parts of the country had affected the entire peasantry as well as the middle-classes. To alleviate the hardships, "husbands have been found selling their wives with children and women have sold themselves to ensure a bare existence."

... In some Bengal districts 85 to 90 per cent of the population was on the verge of starvation. It was small wonder if girls were sold. The presence of a large army always tends to encourage immoral traffic. Family life in many Bengal districts had been uprooted. The number of brothels had also increased, the number of prostitutes in Calcutta had risen from 25,000 in 1928 to 40,000 in 1945. This raised the question of VD which was rampant in almost all the cities of India.

The report on traffic in women was prepared by the Member-in-Charge, Mrs Renu Chakravarty.

2. Benares Hindu University Disallows Teaching of Vedas to Women

Extracts from a news report, 'Women and the Vedas'. *Hindustan Times*, 26 January 1946.

Benares, January 25. The committee appointed by the Syndicate of Benaras University to consider the question whether girl students can be allowed to study Vedas at the University has, it is learnt, recommended that they should not be allowed to study the Karmakanda part of the Vedas. The reason stated to be is that this part is meant for only those who intend to become priests. The Hindu Shastras do not permit women to become priests.

The Committee feels that girls may however, study the literary part of the Vedas....

3. Women Employment and the Federal Public Service Commission

Notes circulated between Department of Agriculture and Establishments Section, Home Department, Government of India; 19-20 February 1946. File No. 210/46; Home (Establishments) Department, Government of India (1946); National Archives of India.

Notes from the Agriculture Department

It may, however, be pointed out that women with requisite qualifications are not likely to become available to compete for the post [Director of the IIST (?)]. As such it is hardly necessary to debar them from applying for the post. In the circumstances it is for consideration that in order to avoid further delay in this case the word 'yes' may be inserted against column 19 of the requisition form.

19.2.46.

For the reasons given by the VCICAR [?] in his note of 12.12.45 it is not considered desirable to have women competing for this post. Whether any are available at all, is a different question. Home Department may please see immediately and advise in what form we are to proceed with the declaration under Section 275 of the Government of India Act.

H.C. Sharma.
19.2.46.

Notes in the Home Department

As we have already explained on another file from the Agriculture Department, it is not necessary to issue a formal declaration under Section 275 of the Act. The procedure followed

in such cases is to place on record on the file a statement of the reasons why women are considered ineligible for appointment to a particular post and to state in the letter forwarding the requisition for recruitment to the Commission that the declaration of the Governor-General-in-Council under Section 275 has been obtained that women are ineligible for this post. It is not also necessary to submit such cases to HE [His Excellency] since the term 'Governor-General' should be construed as Governor-General-in-Council, vide Section 313(3) of the Act.

I would add, however, that I agree with the suggestion made in the last para of the Agriculture Department office note of 19.2.46 that it is not necessary to debar women from applying for the post when it is reasonably clear that women with requisite qualifications are not likely to be available to compete for the post with any chance of success. Such declarations on ineligibility of women inadvertisements for recruitment to posts by the FPSC [Federal Public Service Commission] attract the attention of women's organisations in the country who are now wide awake about their rights and disabilities and not infrequently make representations to the Home Department against the practice of the Departments declaring them ineligible for recruitment to services under Government.

B.D. Tewari,
Assistant Secretary.
20.2.1946.

4. Women and Employment within the Government Services

Notes circulated within the Home Department, Government of India; 7-10 May 1946.
File No. 30/16/46; Home (Establishments) Department, Government of India (1946);
National Archives of India.

Home Department

It has been observed that in the lists of Central candidates now being received from the FPSC [Federal Public Service Commission] the names of women candidates are appearing. I have spoken to Mr Phillips and apparently the possibility of there being women candidates and of the method of selection to be employed in their case has not so far been considered. There are at present seven such candidates and if the lists so far received are a fair sample we may anticipate the number of women candidates to be about 1%, or about 35.

At present such candidates are being held in abeyance pending instruction.

A draft d.o. asking for Sir Frederick Robertson's views on this point is placed below.

A. Halliday,
7.5.46.
Officer on Special Duty.

J.S.

For what services?

This matter requires examination in Establishment Section before we proceed further.
What is the position about female eligibility?

Illegible.

Please see Section 275 of the Government of India Act. Before coming into operation of the Act we took steps to declare women ineligible for the ICS and the IP and directed other

Departments to do so as regards the Services under their control in which they did not want women candidates.

As regards the filling up of new posts the Departments write to the Federal Public Service Commission to declare women ineligible in the advertisement if the intention is to keep women out.

It will therefore be necessary to find out for what posts or Services these 7 candidates have applied and whether they are eligible for these posts or Services. If they are already ineligible the applications cannot be entertained.

D.C. Das.

9.5.46.

Deputy Secretary

OSD (Capt Halliday)

CPSI [?] is placed below. Women are eligible for services under Posts and Telegraph Department and Department of Information and Broadcasting.

A. Halliday.

10.5.46.

5. Supplementary Agenda for All India

Women's Conference Meeting at Calcutta

Supplementary Agenda for the Standing Committee, All India Women's Conference, at a meeting to be held in Calcutta from 26-28 July 1946. File No. 419 (Reel No. 26); All India Women's Conference Papers (1946); Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

Supplementary Agenda

52. Appointment of Scrutineers for the Presidential Voting Papers.

53. Report of the Subcommittee on Tea Plantations in Assam (Mrs Renuka Ray).

54. That a Memorandum on Food be prepared for submission to Government (Mrs Phulrenu Guha).

55. Resolution on enquiry of condition of women's services. (Mrs Renu Chakarvarty).

56. Consideration of Chittagong's application regarding Branch Representative for East Bengal (Mrs Renu Chakravarty).

57. That the Office Secretary be authorise to circulate all circulars sent by Standing Committee members in the absence of the Secretary (Dr Mrs Phulrenu Guha).

58. "Resolved that a letter be sent by the AIWC to the Women's Association of America in the form hereto attached, expressing the AIWC's regret at the silence of the women of America about the atom bomb experiments and urging them to use their influence on the side of peace, as the knowledge of the atom bomb is mainly in the hands of the American nation."

"The AIWC is greatly pained and surprised at the silence of the women's associations, the prominent women of America (barring a few exceptions) in permitting the senseless waste of money on the deadliest instrument of destruction in peacetime in the name of science.

"There seems to be no organised campaign by the women so far, to stop and prevent sabre rattling and injudicious statements on the part of their statesmen and higher officers, which action tends to create and promote antagonisms instead of preventing them.

"The AIWC appeals to the women of America through their various organisations to use their great and undoubted influence in the cause of world peace, as the knowledge of the atom bomb is mainly in the hands of the American nation. It further calls on them to be ever watchful that the so-called conflicts of political and economic interests are not used by self-seeking politicians and industrialists to plunge the world once again into another and worse inferno."

(Mrs M.J. Lam).

59. Declaration of result of election of the President for the 19th Session of the All India Women's Conference.

60. Invitation of Special Delegates to the next Conference.

61. *Food*

(a) "Realising that there is a serious shortage of food, the AIWC views with alarm the inadequate supply of import coming to India and condemns the ridiculously low allotments made to India by the Combined Food Board despite the fact that the surplus wheat in America is capable of making up the world shortages of wheat.

"This meeting is of opinion that food is being used as a bait in the game of sustaining empires and spheres of influence, as is borne out by the food priorities granted to the American occupied zone of Germany and Japan and the sabotaging the Indonesian Government offer of rice for India by denying accommodation on ships.

(b) "We view with alarm the rapidly deteriorating food position in this country. Unless the complacent and callous manner in which the situation has been tackled by Government in the past is rectified, there is likelihood of the disaster of 1943 in Bengal, overtaking the country as a whole.

"We are strongly of opinion that black-marketing and hoarding can and must be stopped by swift and exemplary punishment such as heavy term of imprisonment, public flogging, etc. It is necessary that the corrupt officials who are directly responsible for the rampant corruption in the Government departments as well as big hoarders and black marketeers in influential positions should be first dealt with instead of confining attention to petty cash offenders. To ensure effective public cooperation an adequate machinery must be set up to protect individuals who help in bringing offenders to book.

"We demand that Food Advisory Committee consisting of representatives of parties and organisations who command public confidence. The advice of such Committees should be considered binding upon the Government if they are to have an effective voice.

"Finally we call upon all women to help in creating a strong and vocal public opinion against corruption, hoarding and black-marketing and to take an active part in rousing the public conscience to avoid wastage of foodstuff and help in eliminating the terrible crisis facing India today by every means in their power."

62. *Conditions of Service of Women*

"Taking note of the fact that war and economic necessity has brought about a large increase in the number of middle-class women employed in different services, we are conscious that this has given rise to various problems connected with their conditions of service of which the public and even women organisations are not adequately aware. The Conference is of opinion that in several fields of services, women work under such unfavourable and sometimes dis-

graceful conditions that affects the efficiency and also fails to draw the right type of women for many of these jobs such as nursing.

“Realising that very little information is available in regard to these conditions, we resolve to appoint an investigation committee which will collect data from all Provinces and will report to the next meetings of the Standing Committee who will then decide upon the future course of action.”

63. *Postal Strike*

“The Standing Committee of the AIWC sympathises with the difficulties faced by the Postal and Lower Grade Employees due to low wages, overwork, etc., and demands that the Government should immediately open negotiation with their representative with a view to reaching an amicable settlement.”

6. Resolutions Passed by All India Women's Conference

Statement by the Honorary General Secretary, All India Women's Conference; Bombay, 2 August 1946. File No. 361 (Reel No. 24); All India Women's Conference Papers (1946); Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

Resolution Passed by the Standing Committee of the All India Women's Conference, Meeting in Calcutta at the End of July 1946

Release of Political Prisoners

“This meeting of the Standing Committee of the All India Women's Conference welcomes the action of those popular ministers in the Provinces which have released all political prisoners.

“It demands the immediate release of the remaining political prisoners particularly the pre-Reform prisoners of Bengal and Assam all of whom continue to be detained in Jail under ordinance even after the expiry of their full terms of imprisonment ranging from 10 years to 17 years.”

Release of INA and Other Prisoners

“This meeting of the Standing Committee of the All India Women's Conference demands the immediate release of:

- (i) the INA prisoners;
- (ii) those convicted in August '42 movement;
- (iii) those convicted for RIN strike.”

Clemency

“In view of the announcement that the British Government has decided, as an act of clemency, not to institute further criminal proceedings against persons alleged to be guilty of collaboration with the enemy in the British territories in South East Asia where no atrocity and brutality is involved, the Standing Committee of the All India Women's Conference urges upon the Government that the following persons, who were tried under Ordinance I of 1943 (Enemy Agents' Ordinance) and were sentenced to death and whose sentences were later on commuted to transportation for life, be released forthwith.”

Repression in States

(a) "The Standing Committee of the All-India Women's Conference condemns the repression extant in most of the Indian States. It condemns not only the attacks on people's organisations—banning meetings and processions, mass arrests and imprisonment of leaders, the denial of civil liberties of individuals and lathi charges and firing on unarmed crowds—but the entire system whereby the autocratic rulers in the Indian States rule over one-fourth of India's population.

"The All-India Womens' Conference believes that a free India cannot have room for such undemocratic institutions and lends its full support to the demands of the people of the States for full responsible and representative Government."

(b) "The Standing Committee of the All-India Women's Conference urge the Governments of all Indian States

(i) fully to cooperate with the united efforts that [are] being made to devise a suitable Constitution for an Independent India, and

(ii) to include a just proportion of women citizens among the States' representatives to the Constituent Assembly."

Illegible,
Honorary General Secretary,
All India Women's Conference.

7. Report of All India Women's Conference Meeting at Calcutta

News report, 'Women leaders meet'. *People's Age*, 18 August 1946.

The Standing Committee of the All India Women's Conference met in Calcutta from July 26 to 28 under Smt. Hansaben Mehta's presidentship. It was a well attended gathering, and well represented, with the Indian States sending a good quota.

The session was historic and some of the resolutions it passed were in line with the times and were truly representative of the great awakening among women of our land.

Very emphatically the meeting gave its fullest support to the demands of the postmen and their strike and urged that the Government should immediately take steps "to reach an amicable settlement with the representatives" of the postmen.

It was a forward step. Never before has the AIWC so emphatically come out in support of any working-class action to win their demands.

And the resolution was a unanimous decision of the Standing Committee, supported enthusiastically by young and old, by the conservative and the radical alike. It showed that the AIWC had taken a step towards representing and voicing the feelings of the middle-class housewife, the workers' wife—the women in real need.

Princely Autocracy Condemned

Uptil now, though the AIWC has stood for freedom and responsible democratic government never in its 20 years' history has it openly condemned "the entire system where the autocratic rulers in the Indian States claim to rule over one fourth of India's population ..." and lent "... its fullest support to the demand of the people of the States for full responsible and representative Government."

Categorically and concretely it voiced its opposition to the banning of meetings, denial of civil liberties and mass arrests of leaders.

Clearly the AIWC could not be fooled either by the Chamber of Princes' declaration, or by the British Government's propaganda, about the bogus 'new reforms' in the Indian States! Again from the Liberals to the Communists—every section was emphatic in its condemnation.

But while this was a great step forward, it was extremely surprising that the resolution did not even so much as mention the heroic struggle of the people of Kashmir, nor demand the immediate release of their great leader, Sheikh Abdullah.

Resolutions demanding the lifting of bans on political parties, and the immediate release of all politicals, specially the pre-Reform prisoners of Bengal, the INA and RIN strikers were passed.

For Food, Cloth and People's Needs

Other resolutions were passed for more hostels for women students, demanding more production of cloth and its better distribution with the help of people's representatives (specially on the Cloth Control Board), and for a memorandum on the food situation to be sent to the Central Government demanding imports, monopoly procurement through popular committees, strong steps against hoarders, etc.

An appeal was made to the women of the world to keep their faith in nonviolence and peace at this critical juncture when the world was being faced with a third world war. The AIWC joined the women of England and America in condemning the destructive use of the atom bomb specially as a weapon of war.

A message of greetings was sent to the brave Burmese and Malayan women who in their struggle for freedom were facing torture and prison.

The struggle of the Indians in South Africa was fully supported and all help was promised.

For the Working Men and Women

A fairly good report (to be published soon) was given after an enquiry into the conditions of labour in the tea plantations. A part from demanding better conditions of work, etc., the AIWC demanded for the tea-labourers the right to form their independent unions and the free entry of all persons into the tea gardens.

The report when published will expose the intolerable conditions existing under the White sahebs who own not only the gardens, but the men and women who work in them.

The Committee is now to prepare another report on the condition of work of those in the teaching and nursing professions.

8. All India Women's Conference Wants Dismissal of Bengal Ministry

Statement by Hansa Mehta, President, All India Women's Conference, published in *Bombay Chronicle*, 28 August 1946, under the heading, 'Wanted impartial inquiry'. File No. 419 (Reel No. 26); All India Women's Conference Papers (1946); Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

Bombay, August 24, (UPI): "The terrible happenings in Calcutta during the last week should be an eye-opener to those who talk so lightly and in an irresponsible manner about 'Direct

Action', civil war and revolution," says Mrs Hansa Mehta, President, All India Women's Conference, in a statement to the United Press of India today. Mrs Hansa Mehta added: "that frightful stories have come about the child victims of the outrage! They can only be cowards and brutes who could have treated the children in the way they have. Is it necessary for India to go through this carnage and bloodbath before the Hindus and Muslims can live together in peace? Who gains by such exhibition of temper and brutality? The Muslims cannot exterminate the Hindus from this country nor *vice versa*. How then does it help the country or any particular community to resort to such terrorism? It only helps the *goondas* on both sides to indulge in an orgy of killing, arson and looting."

Mrs Hansa Mehta says: "What is, however, most amazing is that a responsible Government in Bengal should allow things to go so far. Either the Government was not capable of checking the riots or they are behind the miscreants responsible for it. In either case they have proved themselves unworthy of any trust and should be dismissed if they do not resign. There should be an impartial inquiry into the matter and those responsible, however, high-placed, should be brought to book."

9. AIWC Unhappy at Muslim League Not Joining Interim Government

President's Circular No. 4, to Branch Representatives and Members of Standing Committee, All India Women's Conference; Bombay, 16 September 1946. File No. 419 (Reel No. 26); All India Women's Conference Papers (1946); Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

*Bombay,
16th September 1946.*

Dear Friend,

National Government

At long last a National Government is functioning at the Centre. On behalf of the All India Women's Conference I had sent a wire of felicitations to Pandit Jawarharlal Nehru on the auspicious day he took charge expressing a hope that he will lead us to complete independence.

It is indeed a matter of regret that the Muslim League should have thought it fit to keep out of the Government. It is also regrettable that organised violence has broken out in some parts of the country which has caused considerable loss to life and property. The riots in Calcutta tell terrible tales and I had issued a statement sometime back asking for public enquiry. (A copy of the statement as published in the *Bombay Chronicle* is enclosed). It was indeed a pleasure to read of heroic women in Calcutta, both Hindus and Muslims, trying to help each other during the disturbances. We must feel very proud of them. We as a Conference stand for peace and for unity of this country. It is up to us to see that the communal poison does not spread; that we are able to maintain peace in spite of all provocations; and that we persuade others to do likewise. This transition period will be a crucial test for us all. Let us be firm about our convictions and stand by our faith in peace and unity.

The Charter and the Memorandum

You will have seen from the Minutes that we have taken some important decisions. The Charter and the Memorandum with slight modifications have been ratified. They will now be sent to the Interim Government as well as to the Provincial Governments. I would also like the Branches to take up the Charter and educate the women with regard to their rights and duties.

Election to Local Bodies

I would also like to draw the attention of the Branch Representatives to the coming elections to Municipalities and Local Boards. They must see that more women are put up and that women should have a definite programme for the welfare of the people.

Hostels for Women

Another important item to which I would like to draw your attention is the hostel for women. The Branches, specially those in cities like Bombay, Calcutta, etc., should take it up in right earnest.

Political Rights

Now that the Indian States are introducing some constitutional changes women should see that they got same rights as men. They must bring it to the notice of the Conference where political rights are denied to women.

All-India Day

I would once again remind you of the 14th November which is to be the Conference Day. I hope the members will do their best to celebrate the Day in a fitting manner and collect as much money as they can.

Yours sincerely,
Hansa Mehta,
President,

All India Women's Conference.

10. All India Women's Conference Circular on Untouchability

Circular No. 1, by Member-in-Charge, Social Disabilities (Untouchability), to Members of the Standing Committee, and Branch Representative, All India Women's Conference; Calcutta, 29 September 1946. File No. 419 (Reel No. 26); All India Women's Conference Papers (1946); Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

*Calcutta,
29 September 1946.*

Dear Friends,

I beg to bring to the notice of our members that the Government of Bombay is soon bringing a Bill to give all civic rights to Harijans. After studying the Bombay Bill our members may request the members of legislatures of their provinces to bring similar Bills to uplift the position of Harijans in society.

To those of our members who have taken up the work of eradicating untouchability, I beg to remind that the AIWC expects us to carry on intensive propaganda amongst the Caste Hindus against the evil of untouchability. We have to try to secure equal social amenities for the Harijans, such as common schools, common hostels, places of worship and wells.

Our members can cooperate with the members of the Harijan Sevak Sangh in the work of eradicating untouchability. During Durga Puja and Diwali holidays some sort of social gathering like sports or picnics for Harijan children along with children of other communities should be arranged. We should try our utmost that our children should not inherit the idea of untouchability.

Yours sincerely,
Saudamini Mehta.
Member-in-Charge,
Social Disabilities,
AIWC.

5.E CULTURE

5.E.i Hindi as India's Lingua Franca

1. Hindi as India's Lingua Franca

News report, 'Lingua franca of India is Hindi'. *Hindustan Times*, 10 May 1946.

Dehradun, May 9. "Through Hindi is not my mother tongue, I am an ardent devotee of Hindi," said Dr Amarnath Jha, Vice-Chancellor of Allahabad University, while addressing a meeting held here on Sunday under the auspices of the Vani Parishad.

He said: "It is Hindi that could claim to be the 'lingua franca' of India. It is erroneous to think that Hindi will prove detrimental to the interests of the languages of other provinces."

He deprecated the idea of evolving [a] third language like Hindustani as the 'lingua franca' and said that it was fraught with grave dangers. He cited the language policy of AIR.

Concluding, he explained the differentiation between Hindi as 'lingua franca' and Hindi as mother tongue when he said that Hindi as 'lingua franca' should be Sanskritised and as mother tongue should assimilate all local words, phrase and terminology which are in common usage.

2. Hindustani as Common Language of Indian People

Extracts from a news report, 'Magazine to promote Hindustani as common language'. *Hindustan Times*, 16 May 1946.

Allahabad, May 13. The Hindustani Culture Society, Allahabad, is now taking definite steps towards the development of Hindustani as a common language of the Indian people.

The Society has decided to publish a monthly journal, the *Naya Hind* in Hindustani from July 1 from Allahabad. The magazine will be printed in both Devanagari and Persian scripts and will be run by an editorial board, consisting of Dr Tara Chand, Mahatma Bhagwandin, Syed Muzaffar Hasan, Pandit Bishambar Nath Pandey and Pandit Sunderlal (Secretary of the Hindustani Society).

The *Naya Hind* will be devoted to the fostering and development of common India culture and elucidation of the fundamental unity of the great religions and cultures of India and the objective study and presentation of the country's history....

5.E.ii Indian People's Theatre Association

1. *Tebhaga* Song

Tebhaga Song, c. 1946, translated from Salil Chaudhari, *Ghoom Bhangar Gan* (in Bengali); Calcutta, 1951.

Tebhaga Song

"Let us defend, let us defend,
Let us defend our paddy,
Sharpen our sickles.
We pledge our lives, we pledge our honour,
Never, never again shall we surrender,
This paddy which is our life, reaped with our blood....
We gave our lives in 'Fifty',¹
We surrendered the honour of our mothers and sisters,
To you who are the stars of the back market,
We will no longer store grain in the granary of others,
We will no longer starve,
We have suffered enough,
The land to he who tills it,
Do not forget this pledge of the rough hands that grasp the plough.

¹ A reference to the 1943 Bengal famine - the year in the Bengali calendar was 1350

2. Review of Patriotic Film *Shikari*

Article, 'Freedom's good fight in a film'. *Free Press Journal*, 7 January 1946.

"We shall not suffer slavery any more. This land is ours, and ours it will remain, with the blood of our heroes and of our children is our flag painted. That flag shall never be lowered."

Such are the sentiments expressed in dialogue and implicit in the theme of the Filmistan picture *Shikari* just released at the Roxy Theatre....

The story is told in terms of fast action, real action of the battlefield in the Burmese jungle, reproduced with an authenticity that had so far been the monopoly of American films. It is good to see Indian and Burmese farmers banding themselves into guerilla units and effectively handling modern weapons with that rare sense of strategy that is born of the instinct for freedom. It is better still to find them refusing to weep over their own blood, the meanest of them eventually rising to the full height of martyrdom by sheer strength of the atmosphere about him. And it is positively enthralling to watch the finale, a band of rugged men and women, with muskets and machine guns taken from the enemy, soaked in their own blood and within sight of their own dead, swearing to man and God that they would continue to spill blood for freedom as long as there was any flowing in their veins.

That is *Shikari*, otherwise too, an interesting and entertaining motion picture. It is interesting for its performances, led by the consummate star Ashok Kumar who gives an account of himself which may will be described as inspired....

3. Indian People's Theatre Association Performs India Immortal

A small boxed advertisement for the Indian People's Theatre Association's performance of "India Immortal", a programme of music and dance to be held at the Excelsior Theatre, Bombay, on 16-17 April 1946. *Free Press Journal*, 16 April 1946.

CHANGE OF PROGRAMME

MANY NEW DANCE ITEMS

THE CENTRAL TROUPE

OF IPTA PRESENTS

INDIA IMMORTAL

TODAY THURSDAY, 6.30 & 9.30 P.M.

TOMORROW 6.30 P.M.

EXCELSIOR

4. Indian People's Theatre Association's First Film, *Dharti Ke Lal*

Article, '*Dharti Ke Lal* blazes trail for realism on screen'. *People's Age*, 2 June 1946.

I think I had better state clearly before I begin to analyse this film that if I am found using superlatives about it, I shall be doing so deliberately and with a due sense of responsibility. Of course, not being a professional film critic and having no reputation to lose, I shall not be afraid of saying what I really believed, but I have a great respect for words and do not use them without care. So here goes.

After seeing *Dharti Ke Lal*, I feel impelled to say that in my opinion, it is most honest and most beautiful film yet produced in India. I will venture further and say that its epic quality compels comparison with *Grapes Of Wrath* and *The Good Earth*, and emerges with honor from the test which the great social feature films of Hollywood and Russia have established.

But how, the sceptical reader may ask, can I justify such large generalisations?

I shall answer this question by way of notes on three aspects of the film.

Content

The pertinacity of instinct which made IPTA choose the great hunger of our own country shows that they have seized upon the basic problem of our country, one which poses itself before our eyes through one famine after another.

Those who might have objected to IPTA's choice of the Bengal tragedy of two years ago, because they want to forget such depressing matters, will find that in view of the threatened horrors in Bombay Presidency remembrances of things past are necessary.

But it is not enough for artists to choose good social themes. They have to make works of art out of them. And in presenting the story of a few families in a little village in Bengal, from the comparative prosperity before the famine through the slow oncoming of the disaster which takes them on the long trek to Calcutta till the return of the survivors, the IPTA have throughout scripted and dialogued without sentimentality or wasteful personal bitterness, and with uncommon integrity.

The paperwork which is said to have been done by a team under the leadership of Ahmed Abbas, is distinguished by a poetic pictorialism which fixes each character with a few shots and develops his or her latent individuality through tender half-broken words and silences.

In this way the portraiture becomes psychologically honest and the relations of the character are established through concrete day-to-day talks about simple human needs.

And yet the whole film is charged with spirit, a kind of emotional hangover, the spirit of India itself, the quintessence of customs and conventions and ideals of the past hesitating tremulously before the challenge of the present, insidiously presented through the juxtaposition of every social effect with its ultimate cause.

Direction and Acting

The script and the songs would not alone have made it a great picture. It is the comprehensive vision of Abbas, the sweep of his imagination, as well as the lyricism implicit in the intense moments he has felt and recorded which makes *Dharti Ke Lal* the first film of last twenty-five years in India.

Considering the studio difficulties which sometime involve the shooting of the later or the middle parts of a film first and the earlier parts last, Abbas has handled the poise and the counterpoise of each part of the film with remarkable sureness of touch as though he were a composer orchestrating a symphony.

And the actors— is it the team spirit, the voluntary association for the purpose of making this film, that enables them to surpass themselves? I wonder.

From the moment that Shombhu Mitra puts his *narial* [coconut] hookah to his mouth, he becomes the typical peasant head of the family, careworn, indulgent, and content. And when Hamid Butt, in the role of Ramzan Dada, comes to sit by him without a word being spoken between them, their deep friendship is established.

Balraj Sahni, as the eldest son, allies himself to the land without any effort and becomes the authentic lean peasant.

Damayanti Sahni acts the role of the elder sister-in-law with inimitable ferocity.

I wish the man who goes mad with strain had been madder. And the young bridegroom's makeup in the latter part of the film is self-conscious.

But the young bride (Tripati Bahadur) acts with a restraint and sensitiveness that reproduces the demure shyness of the newlywed, as it has seldom surely been seen on the Indian screen through the perpetration of hard-bitten, illiterate and obtuse but much advertised film stars.

Professional actors like David are in tune with the rest of the cast possibly because the team spirit prevails.

The IPTA slogan 'People's Theatre Stars the People' is indeed justified.

Technique

Neither the theme, the directing or the acting would have made this as good as it is, if photography had been inadequate.

Of course, there are technical lapses and defaults which are part and parcel of our present inadequate development.

Abbas seems to have learnt much from the Russians, and he has so thoroughly absorbed outside influences that *Dharti Ke Lal* emerges as a good synthesis of Indian potential and the West.

The hallmark of this film is simplicity, utter simplicity, and poetic sensibility. And those who know how difficult it is to achieve this with such complex material as India will realise the measure of IPTA's achievement.

The music is well composed by Ravi Shankar.

The IPTA Central Troupe dances with éclat.

With *Dharti Ke Lal* we are well on the way towards a new era of the realist cinema in our country, guided and directed by honest writers and artists. And it may well start a movement which will sweep aside the putrescent rubbish with which the commercialists have so far fed us.

5. Indian People's Theatre Association's Cultural Programme, *Salute Kashmir*

Article, '*Salute Kashmir* cultural function in Bombay'. *People's Age*, 4 August 1946.

Over 800 people packed the Sunderabai Hall to capacity on the evening of Sunday, July 28. Hundreds more waiting outside have demanded a repetition of the programme.

The great 'Poet of the Revolution', Josh Malihabadi, began the evening's programme with a poem saluting the Kashmiri people and sharply castigating those leaders who are holding back the Indian people from marching to join hands with Kashmir.

A Marathi song by Amar Sheikh and his squad and a Marathi *powada* (ballad) written by Anna Sathe and sung by Gawankar told of the glorious battle of the people of Kashmir.

One-act Play

A one-act play, written by Balraj Sahni, gave a glimpse of fighting Kashmir, centred round preparations for one of the most memorable incidents in Kashmir's struggle—the taking out of a torchlight boat procession on the Dal Lake—the play drew attention to the participation of all sections of the people in the movement.

The old artisan dyer (played magnificently by the author himself) was the most inspiring character in the play—and when he shouted the slogans of Kashmir's national movement, a thrill ran through the audience.

The poet Mahboob; the Kashmiri Pandit Kailash; the once timid now brave, Nilkanth Kak (played excellently by Mama Phansalkar)—ashamed of his name—the policeman who throws off his filthy uniform—the others, artisans and workers—all gave one in a short period of less than half an hour a vivid impression of the unity of the Kashmiri people.

The curtain came down with a mighty kick at the policeman's pugree—symbolic of fighting Kashmir and the blows it is striking at the army and the police in every clash in the streets of Srinagar.

Moving Ballet

The highlight of the programme was a ballet by the Communist members of the Central Squad. It began with a beautiful slow boat- - dance with a haunting melody in the background—the tale of the beauty of Kashmir and the misery of its people.

Suddenly the machine guns rattle --the dancers—men and women dressed in typical Kashmiri costume---fall dead and wounded.

The news comes, Sheri-i-Kashmir is arrested. The upsurge begins.

The Maharaja and his British master appear on the scene dancing happily together. They began their terror on the people. The terror dance fills one with horror.

And then the dance of triumph ... we have crushed them ... the British master and his Princely agent dance around arm in arm (after, of course, the latter has polished well the boots of his boss—a scene which brought the house down with laughter).

Tyrants Quit

Then slowly the underground resistance begins. And you see the panic of the Prince and the British. The ring around the two oppressors tightens and then the blows come—a rain of them from men and women all—and the tyrants, overpowered ... quit.

The ballet ends with a song led by Benoy Roy: “*Hum Kashmiri honge sub azad.*”

Prem Dhawan who dances as British Imperialism, and Gangadharan as the Maharaj, are outstanding, and their excellent performances hammered out the vital importance of the Princes to the British.

The chorus is proud and defiant. Their dances and songs portray strikingly every emotion of the Kashmiri people; their pride in their homeland, their hunger, their hate, fearlessness, courage, determination.

Speeches and Collection

Rajani Palme Dutt spoke and gave a report of his recent tour of Kashmir. And finally P.C. Joshi spoke and called for funds for Kashmir.

Over four hundred rupees were collected on the spot. The donations ranged from one anna pieces to a cheque for Rs 51. This sum is quite apart from about Rs 1500 collected as entrance donations from the audience before the performance.

“Quit India” Song

The evening’s programme ended with a chorus song written and led by Prem Dhawan, which received the most stupendous applause the Sunderabai Hall has probably ever heard.

The refrain of this song: “*Ab Bhago, London Jao*” was applauded again and again.

“*How can we forget the terror of Jallianwalla,
How can we forget the fire of today’s Kashmir.*”

And then:

“*Oh Sahibs, when you go, take your Princely dogs with you.*”

The cheers which greeted this last verse were a living indication of what the “Salute Kashmir” programme had meant to the audience.



6. Progressive Writers Association's Appeal for Communal Harmony

Extracts from a statement circulated by the All India Progressive Writers' Association, and published in the above newspaper under the heading, 'Progressive Writers pledge to end fratricidal war'. *People's Age*, 6 October 1946.

... Calcutta exhibited all that is most rotten, most diseased, putrefying and reactionary in our social and political life; the appeal to religion in order to divide Indian and Indian, to revivalism in order to split the common people; to racialism in order to prove the superiority of one people over another and to perpetuate conflict among them; to communalism in order to consolidate outmoded caste and religious differences— these are the traditional weapons which exploiters use to dominate and enslave the common people.

Our arch-enemy, British imperialism, has sedulously fostered all this in our contry for the last two hundred years.

... The Calcutta outbreak is, therefore the result of the policy of 'divide and rule', of the policy of fostering reactionary anti-national and disruptive ideologies pursued by imperialism for the last 200 years.

We, therefore, accuse British imperialism as the arch-incendiary, the arch-criminal responsible for the Calcutta holocaust and the others which we are witnessing....

We know that even in the hell that was Calcutta the organised working-class not only kept aloof from communal arson, murder, and loot, but, maintaining the unity of Hindu and Muslim workers, actually fought against those who had lost all sense of humanity and patriotism in their communal frenzy.

We know that many ordinary middle-class Hindus and Muslims actually risked their own lives in protecting men and women of different communities. We are proud to know that among the latter are some distinguished members of the Bengal Branch of the Progressive Writers' Association.

We honor all those of the working-class and the middle-class who thus kept the immortal flame of patriotism burning bright in their hearts....

We call upon all our friends to help to turn the tide from fratricidal hatred to the struggle against our British imperialist oppressors.

Signed by

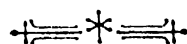
Josh Malihabadi (Poet); K. Ahmed Abbas, Krishan Chander, Upendranath Ashk, Ismat Chughtai, Hajri Masroor (Short story writers); Asrurul Haq Majaz, Sahir Ludhianvi, Kaifi Azmi, Ali Sardar Jafri (Poets); Sajjad Zaheer (Critic and novelist).

Ramesh Sinha (Critic), Ram Bilas Sharma (Poet), Yashpal (Short story writer), P.C. Gupta (Critic), Sheo Mangal Singh Suman (Poet), Amrit Rai (Short story writer), Narottam Prasad Nagar, Sahmsher Bahadur Singh. Rajeeva Saxena, Kedar Nath Agarwal, Vireshwar Singh, Pahari, Vishnu Chandra Singh.

Gunwantrao Acharya, Bakulesh, Prahlad Parekh, Bhogilal Gandhi, Swapnastha.

Mama Warerkar and K. Narain Kale.

Dr Mulk Raj Anand and Balraj Sahni.



7. A Mymensingh Village Poet

A letter to the editor by Sajjad Zaheer, General Secretary, All India Progressive Writers' Association. *People's Age*, 10 November 1946.

Nibaran Pandit is a village poet of Mymensingh. He comes from the robust East Bengal peasant stock. Having lost his father in his childhood he became a biri worker at Kishoreganj. His contact with the soil, however, was never lost and later, attracted by the rising peasant movement of the late thirties, he came back to his village to join the Kisan Sabha.

Here his talent for poetry came to fruition and he became the poet of the kisan masses. In the traditional *Panchali* form he composed song after song on contemporary topics which became immensely popular.

It has to be remembered, however, that due to lack of academic training, he was not at all conversant with Bengali literature as such. It was only as late as in 1943, when Sambhu Mitra (of the India People's Theatre Association) went to Mymensingh for an IPTA training school for the kisan, that he came to hear Tagore's poetry to which he was greatly attracted.

His tribute to the great poet in the form of a poem appeared in *Parichaya*, and immediately attracted the attention of even the highbrows. He also joined the last All India Progressive Writers' Conference at Bombay as a delegate from Bengal.

Nibaran Pandit has lost his all during the last famine. For the last nine months he has been ill and his whole family of six is now facing starvation. The kisans of his district have so long been loyally standing by the side of their poet. But now with the shadow of a second famine creeping on them they have hardly anything left for themselves.

The progressive Writers' Association has decided to collect a fund to help Nibaran Pandit out of his present difficulties. Bengali writers have done so already. I appeal to all progressive writers and artists and to all those who love our folk culture, to contribute to this fund liberally.

All collections should be sent to: Mr Chinmohan Sehanobis, Secretary, Bengal Progressive Writers' & Artists' Association, 46, Dharamtolla Street, Calcutta.

Sajjad Zaheer.
General Secretary,
All India Progressive Writers' Association.

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